



RESPECT

SHARED STORIES ANTHOLOGY 2020

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Now in its 15th year of publication, *Shared Stories* continues to fulfil its aim of offering a diverse range of writing and artwork across Catholic schools in Victoria. In 2020, we had 28 schools involved in the project, with over 800 students and teachers working to collect, edit and produce the published material.

We honour our young people, who have worked through such trying conditions this year. While many students have been doing remote learning for the majority of the year, they still managed to generate meaningful pieces of writing and artwork. The hopes, dreams and challenges of our young writers and artists, as expressed in this anthology, serve once again as an inspiration to a broader world that is too often in despair. This anthology in particular is one to savour for years to come.

Shared Stories would not be possible without the generous support of institutions

that believe in the transformative power of language and art. We acknowledge the following people for the particular interest that they take in *Shared Stories*, which is pivotal to the success of the project:

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SHARED STORIES SCHOOLS FOR 2020

Aquinas College
Catholic Regional College, Melton
Catholic Regional College,
North Keilor
Catholic Regional College, St Albans
CBC St Kilda
De La Salle College
Emmaus College
Holy Rosary Primary School,
Kensington
John Paul College, Frankston

Kolbe Catholic Church
Lavalla Catholic College
Marymede Catholic College
Mazenod College
Nazareth College
Star of the Sea College
St Aloysius College, North Melbourne
St Finbar's Primary School,
Brighton East
St James' Catholic Primary School,
Brighton

St John's Regional College,
Dandenong
St Kevin's Primary School, Ormond
St Mary's Primary School, Hampton
St. Peter's College, Cranbourne
St. Francis Xavier College
Padua College
Salesian College, Chadstone
Simonds Catholic College
Whitefriars College
Xavier College

FRONT COVER ARTWORK

Coco Ficarra
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

My Pure Land

I wanted to explore the concept of my own cultural identity and fluidity between cultures, growing up in Australia. In a stylized form, I used a variety of aesthetically pleasing colours and organic shapes to reflect my own understanding and appreciation of myself and my family. In addition to acrylic paints, I drew native Japanese and Australian botanicals over the top of the painting using Posca pens. This reflects the importance of cultural hybridity in contemporary global society.

BACK COVER ARTWORK

Jon Escobar
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Transition

I completed this photography piece using a model. The artwork reflects the change in emotions we experience through life's challenges and in particular: the challenges of 2020 with the threat of COVID-19 and the many lives lost. The lady holds our gaze as a tear rolls down her face. The halo of light surrounds her as she looks up to the light, signifying that there is ALWAYS hope and RESPECT for life. We are united as one, regardless of colour, race or religion. In the loving arms of 'our mother' we are stronger, 'united' as 'one'.

RECLAIMED

Shane Reid · *Director of Music · Lavalla Catholic College*

Ten years ago, I learnt a valuable lesson about the power and efficacy of words. Our College choir was coming towards the end of a collaborative project with the Gunai Kurnai People of Gippsland. We had been entrusted to commission a choral piece based on their Dreamtime story of Boran the pelican and Tuk the musk duck.

I had clumsily penned a preface for the piece, noting that we had received permission to sing in the 'recovered' indigenous language of Gippsland. I was gently guided, as a mark of respect, to change the word recovered to 'reclaimed.' There is power in the connotations of this singular change. The assertive ownership of the word 'reclaimed,' whilst not righting past wrongs, sees the seizing back of a language forcibly suppressed for over sixty years. The resonance of the words in our piece immediately took on a new meaning for us. Until then, our piece, 'Gunai Dreaming', sat squarely in the same distant realm of Mozart and Bach. Our performance was a historical homage. Now, 'reclaimed,' the words we sang – Cowarr, Gunyah, Wurk Wurk – were contemporaneous with, and resonant of, our modern community.

These words had been reclaimed and given life again.

Words, art and stories may lie latent for weeks, months, years only to be reclaimed. My students have loved this aspect about the Shared Stories project. To see their work published and bound. It gives their thoughts and ideas a sense of permanence. I like to imagine this very almanac sitting on a shelf and, perhaps one hundred years from now, having the power to transport someone to an understanding of a great grandmother they never knew and her experiences of the year 2020.

Early last year, my wife and I visited Tiananmen Square in Beijing. Our guide was an affable and gregarious leader who, until that day, was happy to offer insight into both the perils and positives of modern China. He told our group that he would under no circumstances answer any questions whilst we were in the Square about the massacre that took place there in 1989, an event suppressed in the Chinese media by the government even now.

How luxurious it is to have a voice. And even in these times of 'no mask, no entry,' what freedoms we have in being able to share our words; share our stories. ■



Tahlia Webb
*Year 11 · Lavalla
Catholic College*

Friendship

I am thankful to my friends as I can come to them if I have an issue and they will be there when I need them the most.

INCY WINCY; AN ARACHNIDS' UNTOLD TALE

Alanis Furtado · Year 7 · CRC Melton

Incy Wincy gazed across the thriving garden that lived in the large estate of Roger and Audra Miller-Gatsby. The estate was laced with pale pink gardenias and white Peruvian lilies that smiled in the sunlight. In the corner of Mrs Miller-Gatsby's garden lurked a grey, decrepit willow tree that Incy Wincy thought would have once been as beautiful as the grounds that surrounded it. The old tree reminded him of the one that stood beside the waterspout at Brooklyn St. Deli. The memory of climbing the spout still lingered at the back of his mind, which tormented him every time he recalled the occasion...

Crashing, pouring, lashing thundering, the storm continued to grow. The determined spider drew on the reserves of his remaining strength and gripped tenaciously to the dastardly waterspout. Clutching the drainpipe as a serpent would coil around its prey, Incy Wincy's eight long legs ached with agony. Incy Wincy's grasp weakened, he feared that he could not hold onto the drenched pipe for very much longer. He felt himself beginning to slip from the waterspout and was soon plummeting down into the tall, dark, ghostly grass...

Incy Wincy felt a cold drop of morning dew splash onto him from the nearby mulberry bush, the dew drop woke him from the pitiful memory that he was unfortunately reliving since he had set eyes on the alluring willow tree.

"Audra darling, we really must put that old tree out of its misery." Said Mr Miller-Gatsby in a rather sorrowful tone, as if he felt sorry for the ancient willow tree.

"But Roger, my grandfather planted that tree when he first bought the estate! He would be so disappointed if he saw that it was removed." She said as they both peered outside the window and stared at the elegant garden. "There appears to be a storm coming." Mrs Miller-Gatsby said with uncertainty, quickly changing the subject. Roger and Audra Miller-Gatsby eyed the gloomy rain clouds that began to form in the once clear blue sky.

The enchanting willow tree seemed to be beckoning for Incy Wincy to come closer to it, for that is what he did. Cautiously scuttling toward the mysterious tree, Incy Wincy was again reminded of the

traumatic and undermining waterspout incident that had occurred many years ago. He was now at the foot of the tree stump and remembered that he had failed to climb to the top of the waterspout and looked longingly at the top of the willow tree. Perhaps this time would be different.

Incy Wincy readied himself to climb the tree, he hesitated but eventually began his intrepid climb, for he was in the pursuit of redemption. His confidence rose with every step that he took, and when finally he had any sense of a feeling, that is reality he would actually make it to the top of the tree, he felt a dark shadow circle around him and could hear a faint pecking in the distance, Incy Wincy froze, shuddering...

He turned his head slowly. A midnight black, sharp-eyed crow glared at him. There was a brief moment in time where it seemed that the world had stopped moving. The quick-witted bird began pecking at the tree hysterically in hope of catching the small spider in its beak. There was nothing that Incy Wincy could do, and what a shame it was too, as he had almost reached the top of the willow tree. Incy Wincy heard the clouds start to rumble, rain began pouring down into the garden, heavier and heavier. He remembered when the storm had come down on him whilst climbing the waterspout. While he was in thought, Incy Wincy had realised that the crow had stopped pecking at him, he looked up. The bird was struggling to keep itself in the air as the rain was pelting down and haphazardly tumbled to the ground. Incy Wincy then noticed that the leaves and branches of the tree were shading him from the storm. Both the rain and willow tree were on his side this time.

Incy Wincy started to scuttle up the tree as fast as he could to finish the journey that he had started all those many years ago. Before he knew it, Incy Wincy had realised that he had reached the top of the willow tree, he stood, staring in awe at the world around him. He could see the estate, which was as grand as a palace, and the rippling pond in the garden, which sparkled like the sun, and the gardenias and the lilies, he could even see Mr and Mrs Miller-Gatsby peering through a small window.

In that moment Incy Wincy, the small spider, felt complete and free, he felt happy. ■



Alana Sammut
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting

RESTING ON LAURELS

Julia Fullard · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

The spatula gently knocks against the bowl as I stir the batter. The machine roars with each flick of its switch. *On and off, on and off* in even intervals, timed to the second. The conveyor belt clicks with mechanical urgency. Oil hisses, warbling with each drop of dough into its blistering depths. A domestic symphony.

The sun eases below the jagged spines of Melbourne skyscrapers. The Eureka Tower stands proudly against the horizon, a glittering shard pricking the threadbare clouds. The plastic crystals of my rosary beads glimmer in the murky light, shifting gently in the breeze. The knot where the elastic had snapped holds them fast to the rear-view mirror. Jesus lays pinned mercilessly to the cross, glistening, the letters engraved on the smooth back of the cross scarcely visible.

Murmurs from queuing strangers, motionless in the sticky evening heat, float through the tiny window. Hot, yet seemingly unbothered in such close proximity to sweets and the promise of their sugary euphoria. Tufts of herbs peak through the gaps in the commuters' fraying string grocery bags, wilting in the dwindling sunlight as they wait in line for their order. The scent of sweating fruit and vegetables, bargains from the Footscray Market, hangs damp in the Summer air – a reminder to buy more red onions tomorrow.

Bobbing gently in the oil, I reach to drain each ball, soaked and heavy with liquid, just before they drown. Instinctively, I brace for the oil's scalding spit against my forearm as I dip the gridded strainer into its depths, but my skin has hardened as though armour, numbing its wrath. Lifting them one by one onto the conveyor belt, I smile as each ball of freshly fried doughnut drops fearlessly, perilously, *darlingly* into the bowl of sugar – the mountain of fine granules breaking their fall. *Plonk*. My husband grabs each one, and – like the final, feverish swipe of a conductor's baton – inserts the metal syringe of jam into the heart of the doughnuts, concluding my fugue.

A train hurtles past the station and the van trembles, mouse-like, at the rumble of its feline growl. Its contorted steel limbs carry a new line of phone clutching, swear-word wielding, ravenous passengers to our tiny van. The screaming Melbourne wind has licked away the cursive 'P' and 'D' in 'Peter's Doughnuts', leaving behind pink blotches, like cheeks patchy from blushing. Rust and cobwebs stir beneath my feet. I step gently against the floor, brittle as a cuttlefish bone from years rocked in salty waters against rough sea beds. The horn blares as the train departs for Flinders

Street. I feel the van quiver, frail as a skeleton, against the flesh of Footscray Station.

I watch him handing out orders in sweating paper bags, smiling down at the eager customers. His applauding audience. I tuck my wisps of greying hair back into my hair net and begin to mix the batter again.

The sun slips behind the apartment complexes in the distance, leaving behind a soft pink pallor to silhouette his ceramic figurine of the Virgin Mary cradling the baby Jesus, blu-tacked to the dash beneath it. A gift from his Mother. The shadows expose the dust that haloes her baby-blue head and a series of hairline cracks reappear at her base, despite the remnants of dried glue straining to hold together the fractures.

Every morning, I awake to three daily alarms, the first of which is the echoing crow of magpies. Then follows the overtly enunciated cries of landlords demanding rent, and thirdly, the pleas in heavily accented, disjointed English, of tenants requiring electricity. I lever myself out of bed with three mechanical shifts. Careful not to wake him, I pull on my white tunic, starched and yet still spotted with batter stains. Within ten minutes, I'm out the door, my husband breathing a steady wheeze.

I walk quickly down the hall, the lights flicker and buzz, casting an eerie glow against the wall. Irving Street is a cold monochrome. Streetlights waver with uncertainty. The air always leaves a bitter taste in my mouth. I peer warily around me. Men in navy hoodies lean against the Station, cigarettes balanced between their figures, hunger in their eyes. I duck my head and slip inside the Ethiopian Coffee House for my usual, just before I make my way to the market to buy ingredients for the day and then dinner. Clutching my coffee, I hurriedly walk past the owners of the Vietnamese Bakery as they attempt to wheel a wire rack of plastic-clad coconut buns out onto the footpath, past the spot where the classical evening busker, that Vietnamese man, usually sets up.

As always, when I reach the van, graffiti tags drip on the side of the van in glaring shades of what *Bunnings*' would call 'red glow' and 'quaking grass' but I would call 'sun-dried tomato red' and 'olive' green. I sigh with grim complacency and step inside, turning on the light. The appliances glow with the gloss of a *KitchenAid* display window. I smile. At this time of morning it almost feels like *my* van. I nod towards the rosary and then to Mary before I switch on the machines. The van hums 'Good morning'.

The sun rises slowly, sleepily, *heavily* as I scrub at the spray paint until it is a dull shadow. I fold together the batter in the first of many heaped batches, my arm heaving and sweat beading on my forehead. I ladle the strawberry jam into a jar, and place it next to his metal syringe, ready to be injected into the soft doughy centres of my sweets. It's bright red – *PlayDoh* red – as the new resident's daughter had said, gazing up at my husband through the window, the night they moved in. I smile.

I do all of this before my husband arrives with breakfast, tightly wrapped in cellophane and a grunt before he sits before the dash to say the rosary. That's when he'll flip the neon sign from 'Closed' to 'Open' and smile that practiced smile down at customers from his window. Taking the change before he fills the syringe with jam, he'll

grab my doughnuts and jab them with the product of my Mother's own recipe.

'Last one of the day', he smiles at the tiny customers, reaching down to pass them a paper bag. I can't see them from where I'm standing, cleaning away the end-of-the-day dregs of batter clinging to the counter. I can just make out a woman, the Mother of these invisible customers, in the evening light. It's the new resident again. The *aspiring* author. Attempting to distract her little children from the heaving trains, the spit of swear words, the cries of tenants, with sugary sweets. She isn't the first. Her eyes travel past my husband, talking to her kids and she meets my gaze, her eyes a soft cocoa brown. Slowly, she nods with a wearied smile. As though a response, I match hers with my own. Identical. ■



Isabella Iaccino

*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College
Sydenham/North Keilor*

Tash

Other people may have expectations of who we need to be and what we need to do. If we look different, we are labelled and sometimes thrown aside. We need to cast aside our prejudices and preconceived ideas and respect people for who they are and the gifts they have.



Nicole Carino
Year 12 · St. Peter's College



Anne Jackson
Year 9 · St. Peter's College

OUR PROTECTORS

Marcus Bernardo · Year 8 · Mazenod College

The person that saves your life,
might not be the person that you expect.
It might not be the attractive, strong person that
you perceive when you hear the word hero.
Instead, the 'hero' that saves your life, might be
your next-door neighbour.
They may be the person you see at the park,
everyday walking their dog.
Or those who drive the cars that flash red and
blue.
They are the real heroes of our community.
They sacrifice so much for me and for you.
Not for their own good, but for the benefits of
others.
They may be your family or friends or even you.
Their sacrifice extends beyond the line of duty.

It continues through the rest of their lives.
These people sacrifice time with family and
friends.
They miss weddings, funerals and important
milestones.
They may miss their child's first steps, or first
words, their mother's last breath.
They even lay down their lives, for the protection
of others in the community.
They grind day shifts and night shifts.
Their determination and grit is unbelievable.
Their determination to make your life and your
loved ones lives better.
These people deserve the thanks and respect of
everyone in the community, for everything they
do. ■

A FUTURE

John Htun · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Looking up at the stars, a vision of my future
appears.
I see you, my role model who steers my career.
You changed the world, one step at a time,
showing me that anyone can achieve anything
if they try.
I wish to become like you, learning from my
mistakes and always finding new ways.
Everyone told you it was impossible, that you
would fail, but you triumphed over adversity
and prevailed.

Moving the world forward into a new era,
revolutionising space tech forever.
Driving electric cars seemed deranged but you
fixed it and showed everyone you were sane.
It opened up a new generation for all, new careers
and new jobs.
People respect you everywhere you go, you are an
icon that everybody knows. ■

RESPECT

Thisal Pasqual · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Respect comes in many forms. A handshake, a bow or even just a thank you. I was curious to see what my parents thought of the word respect, so I asked them two questions. First, I asked them what respect meant to them. My father answered, it's "how someone reacts to another person's qualities" and my mother answered "maintaining eye-contact when talking to someone, listening more than talking and speaking in an appropriate tone." My next question for them was the most respectful person they'd met in their lives, both from very different backgrounds. When I asked my father, his example was a Psychology Lecturer from the University of Colombo and my mother's example was her boss's business partner. In this piece, I will share their stories.

Sri Lanka is a small island located to the south of India. Mathugama, my father's hometown is known for being the centre of business near the country. It is one hour away from Colombo, Sri Lanka's business capital. Many years ago, his sister was attending a course at the University of Colombo, and on that fateful day, he met someone who would change his perception of respect forever. He decided to attend a lecture. As soon as the lecture started, he saw amazing respect. He noticed the specific way students conducted themselves when near this particular lecturer was different. They didn't see him as just another

lecturer. My father kept listening to the lecture and found himself to enjoy it very much. He went to the lecture again the next week. The way the teacher had lectured them had earned the respect of those students.

Traditional Foods is a small business located in South Dandenong. The company produces Christmas foods. They export to the Philippines, Mauritius, New Zealand, Thailand, Singapore, Fiji, New Caledonia, Dubai and parts of Europe. It was established in 1993 and they are co-owners of Black Label Solutions. The director of Traditional Foods and co-owner of Black Label Solutions name is Geoff Heath. Whenever a meeting takes place, it is visible to anyone present why he is seen as such a good example of respect. He is soft-spoken, open, honest and always positive. He makes sure that he encourages and congratulates his co-workers. These values are also part of respect. Just like the aforementioned description of how a person reacts to another person's characteristics,

Respect takes many forms and has many meanings. Whether it is respect in the form of admiration of a person like with the Psychology Teacher, or whether it is in the form of positive qualities like in Mr Heath's case, we can be sure that respect is an important part of life, and is a concept that every person in the world follows, and that everyone on the planet is deserving of respect. ■

UNDER A DARKENED SKY

Corbin Livingstone · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

They had been out of the caves for 5 months now, but the sky in all its glory still amazed Clara; something so vast and colourful that lit the earth with a divine glow. Even then, while it was raining, the clouds grey and heavy, it still looked beautiful. Clara was pulled from her thoughts by the feeling of her sister tugging at her sleeve and pointing at the building that had just come into view. Flinders Street Station was one of the few buildings that still stood, the brickwork holding its own against weather and time. The building was covered in moss and vines, nature taking over the once bustling hub. Clara let out a relieved breath. Amy was ten, and with a ten year old's stubbornness, had been adamant when she said she would go with Clara to scout. Clara had caved in after arguing a bit, and now, seeing the station, she realised just how scared she had been for her sister.

Clara started walking faster, eager to be back to safety. She walked by Lily, their dog, and didn't notice that her hackles were raised and that she was emitting a low growl. A blur leapt out of the brush that lined the streets and barrelled towards Amy, who had started to fall behind. Before it could reach her, though, it was intercepted by another blur of fur and teeth, Lily, who wildly batted at it with her paws, raking her claws into the beast and ripping hunks of skin and fur out with her teeth.

The thing squirmed beneath her and flailed about aimlessly, hitting Lily with a backhanded blow that sent her flying into a wall. She did not get back up. Amy was crying now, and Clara had turned, unsheathing one of her knives from her bandolier and she now took aim at the shape loping towards them. She threw the knife and scored a thin line across the beast's side. When she saw it did not hinder it, Clara shouted desperately at Amy, "Run!" Hoping Amy did as she asked, Clara turned back to the thing, just as it lunged. It bit down on her arm, its sharp teeth dug into her flesh, ripping the skin. Clara screamed. As she fell back, Clara heard a loud thud, and thought dimly it could be her heart, now beating hard and fast. The thing then fell limp against her. Weak, her head pounding, she tried to push it off, but found it was deceptively heavy, so instead she lay there, sobbing quietly as its blood trickled down her neck and into her ear.

Abruptly, the weight was lifted off her and she saw an unfamiliar boy, holding a small but wickedly sharp axe dripping with blood. Briefly she panicked, but then realised that must have been the thud she had heard. She shook off her stupor and said, her sobs turning into hysterical laughter, "Thank you!", before she passed out,

blood pooling around her. The boy looked back at Amy, who had run to some nearby bushes and was now staring at her sister disbelievingly, and asked calmly, "Where can we take her?" Amy took a moment to realise he was talking to her, but she pointed speechlessly at the station in reply. He picked Clara up and called out to the bushes, "Jo, could you bring the dog and the little girl?" A woman rose from the brush with a makeshift sled made of rope and wood panelling, she ran over to Lily and lifted the dog onto it, all the while talking in reassuring tones to Amy. They then made their way quickly to the station, leaving the humanoid shape of the dead *Theodir* behind.

Clara woke to the sound of raised voices. *What are they arguing about now?* she thought exasperatedly. She tried to move, but as she sat up, she felt a wave of nausea and a dull throbbing from her arm and fell back to the bed. Flashes of memory returned to her and, with dread, she remembered the *Theodir*.

Fifty years ago, there was a world-wide blackout, enigmatic in nature and never-ending, that rendered all technology useless. This sparked mass rioting almost everywhere in the world. The ones who were targeted by the rioters were the politicians and the government officials. This regression forced a human Cull, a slaughter on a scale never seen before. Billions died and the streets and streams ran red with blood. This left only three hundred million humans alive, a number that had not been seen for a thousand years. Clara's family, and some others, decided to hide away in caves and sewers until the surface was deemed safe. Even though the Cull killed many of the rioters, some of the more bloodthirsty and fanatical survived. These zealots bred with more dangerous animals. The offspring of these abhorrent relationships were humanoid in shape, but with fur, claws, tails, teeth, paws. These abominations, now spread throughout the world, ruled with both their human and beastly parents, they call themselves *Theodir*.

With the memories of the *Theodir*, Clara remembered other bits and pieces. Amy, Clara thought, a nervous tingle spreading throughout her body. She tried to sit up again, ignoring the surge of nausea and the pounding in her head. As she got up, Clara opened her eyes and took in the room before her. She was in a soft bed, which itself was in a largish room, the walls were bleached white and had stains from water damage. She was alone, and her arm was bandaged, in what looked like her father's work.

She got to her feet and stumbled, disoriented. Staggering to the door, she collapsed against it and

it swung open, spilling her into the room beyond. The voices stopped and swift steps approached. She looked up into cloudy grey eyes. Her sister smiled down at her; relief written across her face. Clara pulled Amy down and hugged her tight, mumbling incoherently into her loose brown hair. Amy wriggled away, a flush blossoming in her cheeks, and glared at Clara, and then turned to the other people in the room. Clara finally looked at them.

She had barely caught a glimpse when a furry blur landed on her and started licking her face. Clara burst into laughter, easing Lily off her injured arm and heard answering laughter as the tension in the room dissolved. As her glimpse had shown, before Lily assailed her, her rescuers from earlier were in the room, along with the others from the caves. They had clearly been arguing, as they were breathing heavily, and their faces were flushed. Clara's parents swooped upon her and helped

her into a chair. Her dad fussed over her, checking the bandage, and her mother said, "These are the people who saved you and Amy," indicating the boy she had seen before and a tall redhaired girl, she continued with, "They want to tell us all something, but they wanted to wait for you to wake up."

The boy spoke to the group, in a velvety baritone; "My name is Kevin, and this is my sister, Jolene. We are from another group of survivors." He looked out over the crowd.

Jolene finished eagerly with; "And we would like you to join all of us in safety at a place called the Redoubt." At the words 'safety' and 'us', hope grew in the mass of thin, tired faces, overwhelming any doubts about the strangers. For so long Clara had thought of now, finally, she could think of tomorrow, and she thought of the sky, and what it would bring then. ■



Ryan Duong
Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Imagination in the Hours of Quarantine



Claudia Galea

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Stolen Generations

The artwork captures the result of the devastating occurrence of the stolen generation. During this time Indigenous culture was decimated and families were torn apart, with parents and elders left to die and children to grow up under the ways of the white. Where was the respect for these people and why did the white settlers think they were superior?

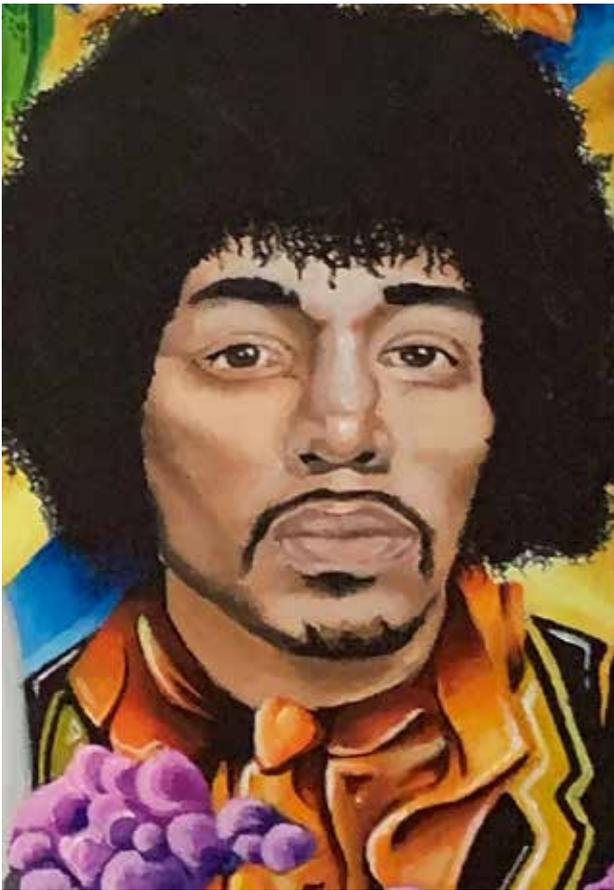


Danijela Dolic

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Social Struggle

The song, 'Took the Children Away' by Archie Roach gives an insight into the period in Australian history now known of as the Stolen Generations. The artwork draws upon lyrics from the song that highlights the struggles that Indigenous Peoples were subjected to.



Isabella Iaccino
*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College
Sydenham/North Keilor*

Hendrix

Living in a world where you can be judged by your looks, Hendrix was able to rise up and become widely regarded as one of the most influential electric guitarists in the history of popular music. Respect for his musicianship has enable him to be one of the most celebrated musicians of the 20th century.



Isabella Iaccino
*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College
Sydenham/North Keilor*

Imagine

John Lennon was not just a man of music he was a man who imagined a very different world from what we have. His world of peace is founded on respect and recognition of others. To achieve his world he calls us to look out for all humanity and unite as one.

EYES ON YOU

Tilda Brennan · Year 10 · Aquinas College

I wait for you just outside your house. I'm in your walls and hiding in your shoes, making you question whether you should wear them. Or would they draw too much attention? I'm the one who makes you wonder if you're walking normally, I'm the eyes on you. I make you fumble with your change, muddle up your order, trip over your own feet. I pull at your clothes and poke at your face, I stop you from going out. I stop you from playing music in your own home, to stop the microwave before it beeps even when you're home alone. What if your neighbours could hear? I'm the one that deletes your texts, because what if you're being annoying or coming across too strong but now it just sounds like you're not interested, so you decide it's just easier to let them text first. I curl around your throat while you practice phone calls in front of your mirror and I tighten like a snake constricts around its prey every time you stutter.

I'm the one that makes you look at your shoes while the worker rings up your things, because what if they're judging what you're getting, even if it is just a bottle of milk and a pack of gum. I'm right there, holding your coins while you make sure

you have enough, even though you're not even at the register yet, because what if you don't and you have to tell them to put something back. I'm there, shaking your shoulders and reprimanding you as you search for the 20 cent coin, because you didn't have enough and now the worker is judging you and everyone is laughing at you and whispering about you because you didn't have enough and now you can never come back because you've just embarrassed yourself and now everyone knows.

I'm the one that makes you shake and sweat before your doctor's appointment, because what if you're just lying to yourself and it isn't as bad as you thought and you don't need help and instead you're just wasting everyone's time and everyone is whispering about how stupid you are.

I'm the one that pulls on your hair when you stumble over your own feet because look at you, you just made a fool of yourself and now everyone is watching and they're all talking about you.

I'm Social Anxiety and I am that nagging voice in your head and the constant eyes on you. ■



Talia Smiton
Year 11 · Aquinas College



Bridget Dale
Year 12 · Aquinas College

QUARANTINE

Abigale Hirschfeld · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

I missed my friends and family the most
Even when I was eating some toast
Times got lonely enough
So I had to be strong and tough
I could only see them on a video call
Technology was the thing I hated most of all
Sadness would dwell all over
I thought this quarantine would last until October
Coronavirus was all over the news
Most days I slept in and had a snooze
Toilet paper was in demand
And traveling around was banned
Glen Twenty was often used
The ozone layer had been abused
Sanitizer became the new gold

People had so much it would last them till they
were incredibly old
Suddenly more people exercised
Sadly, we still couldn't socialize
Netflix and tech companies' stocks went sky high
And we did some online shopping to try and get
a good buy
Eventually restrictions started to ease
School was back and the work was harder
But we were just in time for the winter laughter
Although quarantine was hard
I still got to have a good laugh
The things that I appreciated the most
Were my, friends, family pets and especially my
breakfast toast ■



Abbey Kerton
Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

Alice Mooney · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Coronavirus really took a turn for the worse in the past two months, but it also made us realise what is important in our lives and what we should feel grateful for. Personally, not seeing my friends was quite a challenge. I didn't get to hug, laugh or cry with them. I missed out on important birthdays and celebrations with my family and couldn't get help from teachers immediately during Remote Learning. All of this posed quite a challenge but there was good to come out of this. While in

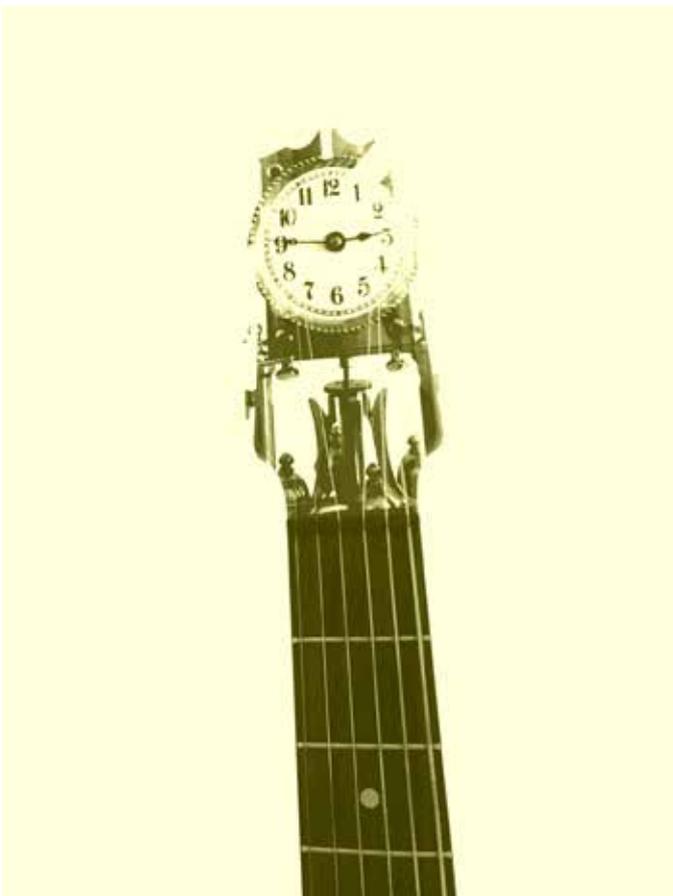
quarantine I realised how lucky I was to be able to grow closer to my family and friends. It also made me realise how I often take people for granted and the things that they do for me and others. I then realised that although this time was bad for me sometimes for other families it must have been really awful, especially not having access to education, living healthy lives and living in a fairly safe country. I now know better the people who love me and who I love and will never take that for granted again. ■



Abraham Kony
Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College



Nicholas Honeyman
Year 10 · Xavier College



Hugo Wyman
Year 10 · Xavier College



Lachlan Dring
Year 9 · Xavier College

These artworks were completed by year 7 students whilst in lockdown and undertaking remote learning. The task was inspired by the environmental artist Andy Goldsworthy who is well known for creating artworks using only natural materials which are made with great care and respect. His Land Art sculptures are intentionally temporary and left in their environment for people to find and for time and nature to destroy and take back. ■



Anabel Solorzano
*Year 7 · St John's
Regional College*



Kiara Lay
*Year 7 · St John's
Regional College*



Meayjowk Opiew
*Year 7 · St John's
Regional College*



Quratullance Ali
*Year 7 · St John's
Regional College*

SIMPLE PLEASURES

Stephen Zavitsanos · Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

Above was a canvas, splashed with more stars than anyone could count, except Lorence. Stars shined atop the lavender and cobalt backdrop and encircled the warm glow of the Moon, with hundreds of thousands of eager eyes watching on as a blissful light danced across the sky. Most witnessed this display through their bedroom windows in the early hours of the morning, but some had different ideas. Some had bigger ideas.

The loud creaking was quickly subdued as Lorence, shuffling up the stairs on all fours, held a thick blanket against the aged wood and mouthed a quiet shush to the ground beneath him, as loud footsteps approached from above.

“What are you doing awake?” Mumbled a lofty bearded man, still dreaming.

Lorence froze, like a prisoner caught tunnelling to freedom.

“It’s a full moon tonight!” He replied, far too energetically for this early hour.

“Alright. Well, get to bed.” His dad smiled. “And get that thing off of your back,” he gestured towards a bulky telescope.

After his dad left, Lorence’s mission continued as he waddled towards the balcony with his blanket around him and telescope clutched by both hands. The magnifying light from above entranced Lorence as he stood outside the balcony door, his eyes reflected the unspeakably stunning gig in the sky. A white light suddenly appearing in a nearby house broke the spell causing Lorence to rub his eyes dry and set the telescope down. He fiddled with it for a moment before peering through the fogged eyepiece. Navigating the instrument towards the window of the lit red-brick house, he spotted a white-haired lady comfortably lounging on the patio, fitted with a smile. Lorence then knew his mission wasn’t yet over.

The friendly aged face grinned at the boy from her solitude, as she looked to the heavens, basking in the glory of Orion’s Belt as it wrapped around the sky like a bandage on a wound. She squinted, adjusting her eyes to the pits of black between the pearls of the night, and the eternal unease they brought on – the emptiness of her home a reminder of her perpetual loneliness. She dealt with these lingering thoughts through rhythmically snapping her fingers to some imagined tune in her head, her favourite at the time was Bobby McFerrin’s ‘Don’t Worry Be Happy’, which was always bound to inspire glee.

With a large yawn, Lorence darted his eyes around the woman’s house, observing the unkempt lawn resulting in excess shrubbery, the flickering lights almost mirroring her compulsive clicks and the unusually shaded mould growing on the side of her house like a festering wound. The lady, still smiling, still clicking, raised her left hand and signalled to the boy to join her in her stargazing. Getting to his feet, Lorence slung the telescope over his shoulder as he quietly navigated the dim hallway and tiptoed downstairs one step at a time.

Now outside, Lorence raised his hand to lock the door behind him, clumsily dropping the keys on the porch decking and freezing him in place. Realising the house remained asleep, he collected the keys and continued his mission. As he approached the neighbour’s house, he followed the sound of the rhythmic clicking. Peering over the side gate, he saw the woman, still staring at the stars.

“There’s a better view from here!” She proclaimed, without turning towards him.

Lorence fiddled with the latch on the gate and moved to stand beside her.

“I didn’t realize I had a fellow stargazer living so close,” she grinned, with her eyes still to the skies.

“My dad bought me a telescope for my birthday last year. I try to use it every night, but he doesn’t let me stay up late.”

Lorence, noticing the woman’s unbroken gaze, mirrored her as he looked up. The pair now stood, entranced by the astronomical splendour above them. For the first time in a long time, having someone to share in her love of the skies, the old woman shed a tear. The boy glanced and noticed the reflection of the bright display on the woman’s cheek.

In their moment of pure bliss, taking in the wonders above them, the world around them stood still. A loud noise penetrated the moment startling Lorence.

“Did you hear that?” His attention diverted from the sky.

Before she could respond, the noise intensified until it became deafening. The once picturesque sky lit up to a blinding white. And darkness followed. ■



Penny Cameron
Year 9 · Padua College

Respect for Women

KINGDOM OF CLOUDS

Georgia Anderson · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

As I float gently over the snow-capped mountains, I remember the first time my mother let me venture beyond the safety of her side. I was too excited to care about the potential dangers of leaving the safety of the pod. Now, 2 years later, the view of the world beneath me still takes my breath away.

People often stop moving when they see me, or others of my kind. They lift their tiny heads to stare as we pass over theirs. Sometimes, if I feel like blowing their minds even more; I float high up above the clouds, flip onto my back and slam down onto the clouds again, sending tiny bits of cloud spraying in every direction. Breaching, my mother calls it. This makes them open their tiny mouths in a state of wonder. Works every time.

Some could say that we are impossible, the fact that something this heavy could possibly float effortlessly above the clouds. I once asked my mother how we

came from the seas to the skies, but she just replied, “Some things are better if you don’t question them, just enjoy them.” My mother is wise. Sometimes I think that she is 5 times smarter than me. But, then again, I am only 2 years old.

Like the ocean, where I lived for the first three months of my life, floating in the air makes everything seem like slow motion. But it’s not irritating, having to move so slowly all the time. I have nowhere to be, nothing to do except just float. As the pod and I head towards the higher peaks, we tip up our noses towards the sun and I close my eyes as we are enveloped by a sea of clouds.

You wouldn’t expect Sky Whales to appreciate the beauty of gravity, but we do. We do as much and more than any human could.

Because I would much rather be here, floating blissfully with my pod, in a kingdom of clouds, than anywhere else. ■

GLASS CUPS

Ruby Utber · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Stuck in a glass cup, waiting to be set free.

I watch the hours pass, taking my primary school days with them.

Fun times are crushed into millions of memories, slowly vanishing before my eyes.

The voice within is telling me I will get through this, but I feel alone with no hope.

I start to lose breath wearing a mask, covering my face and all emotion.

The only way to interact with the outside world is through a small box.

I slowly glance over my shoulder to notice millions of glass cups with people stuck in them as well.

Confused, I stare blankly at the individuals finding ways to be joyful in their glass cup.

Hope is near but to break free we need to do it together!

pod, in a kingdom of clouds, than anywhere else. ■

WHAT WE REALLY NEED

Marcus McCubbery · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Faces as pale as ghosts
Looking down to the dirt
Reminiscing about the memorable times
Before the thing that has ruined lives

Wanting that feeling again more than ever
When laughs would hurt our bellies
When jokes would exchange endlessly
When sport was aplenty
When smiles were as bright as the sun

But not now...
Now we feel like smiling is not right

Now we feel that wearing masks is the new
normal
Now we feel like coughing is a crime
Now we feel expression is the opposite of what
we need
But all of us are wrong

What we really need is love
What we really need is laughs
What we really need is smiles
What we really need is to stay safe
What we really need is to live life ■

SOS FROM MOTHER EARTH

Sophie Billionis · Year 5
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

My rivers are sick,
The air is thick.
The politicians are lying,
As my trees are dying.
The water is contaminated,
With the rubbish you've created.
I am filled with sorrow,
That we might not see tomorrow.
Have you not learnt,
By seeing everything burned.
If you want to survive,
And stay alive,
A solution you must contrive,
So find the courage to take the dive. ■

RIGHT AGAIN

Neve Flannery · Year 6
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

This is my reflection,
in the time of mass infection.
There was a cough and then another,
I was worried and told my mother.
We stay inside and shut the door,
Now we can only read and draw.
I have to stay safe and play,
until that one and only day.
When the door is open wide,
and I will get to go outside.
I can't wait until the morning when,
our big old world is right again. ■

HOMeward

Claudia Ottone · Year 12 · Kolbe Catholic College

A tear swells in the corner of her eye, overflows and drops onto her already dampened cheek, falls to the concrete and gets lost in the rain. The bell echoes out of the church tower to tell her it's 3 o'clock. Her eyes are puffy and red. Almost as red as the tractor the day it happened. That damned tractor. She sits where the road meets the sidewalk, crying silently. A cry that feels surreal, unhomey in a sense. And this time the tears fall lifelessly from her sunken face.

You know Frank. He wouldn't want you to be like this. He wouldn't want this.

Steady hand, she wipes a tear that's fallen into the crevice between her lips. Her other hand gripping the umbrella that hangs over her head like a dead weight. Nevertheless, it's her only source of comfort.

In the moments before she received the phone call, she smelt his familiar sweaty yet warm scent that reminded her of home, and her mouth filled with the taste of dried blood. Death is one of the senses. The voice on the other end of the line seemed so detached, and the numb feeling that came with it was one that she almost welcomed.

Is he better off now, in a better place now?

Sitting there in the kitchen, unable to gather her thoughts, she recalls placing the news-bearing phone face down on the wooden table Frank had once built for them. Small enough for two, but big enough for everything that came between them.

The call was in no way a surprise. She had left Frank in ICU that morning to go home and pack his things. But she had only packed enough to last three days in the hospital. Almost like she knew he wouldn't see the fourth. The pneumonia came back, this time it had overtaken Frank's already weakened body, and when the phone rang at ten past eight that same night, she knew before her finger even hit the green button on the screen. The death certificate states that he died on the 7th.

That's a lie. He died long before that.

Looking out into the faceless crowd, she knows just as well as them. They shouldn't be here. Why now? Frank would have said the same too. Standing there behind the lectern, almost hiding, she recites the words neatly handwritten on the pale piece of paper staring up at her. The words come out easy. Almost too easy. Rehearsed. Not from the heart. Why should she speak any different? The people who are here aren't actually here. These are not tears of grief for a life lost too soon, too innocently; a tragedy. Instead, tears of relief, for a suffering that lasted far too long; a mercy.

She imagines herself eventually running into the neighbour's wife at the hair salon. She sees herself telling her how it was for the better. The more she tells others, the easier it will be to accept it herself. Thinking, just itching to say to her, I need someone to know I once loved him enough to lie to everyone who knew me, about how things really were between us. *I need someone to know that there was a weight on my chest in the shape of his mouth.*

But she knows better. That opening her mouth, like Pandora's box, would only cause more harm than good.

As people silently file out of the church, some stop to pay respects, and attempt to remind her of how strong she is.

How strong I am?

She doesn't need others to tell her she is only becoming strong now. Not now. When this may just be the easiest part.

It's still raining outside, a little heavier than before. But she's all too familiar with the sombre feeling that comes with a storm during the day. Puddles pool together on the ground outside. They remind her of the farm on a winter's day, when Frank would limp back in the house dripping wet, too indifferent to acknowledge the warm dinner she had set out for him. In spite of thoughts like these reminding her of an inevitable widowed life, she feels somewhat relieved. That all those days, months and years he spent hollowing her out, she might be able to feel whole without him.

The neatly stacked pile of memorial cards sit untouched on the kitchen table for the past 2 days. They don't bother her as much as expected. The newly installed chrome railings in the shower are about as useful as the walking frame that's parked in the corner of the bedroom. Her grocery shopping that morning took 15 minutes instead of 45. There are less clothes in the washer when she goes to collect them and hang them out to dry. On her way back inside, she knocks a glass from the corner of the kitchen table near the cards. But the shatter of the glass isn't followed by a look of disappointment from over her shoulder. Instead, she carries on cleaning the broken pieces, picking up every one, realising how small yet free each piece looks on its own.

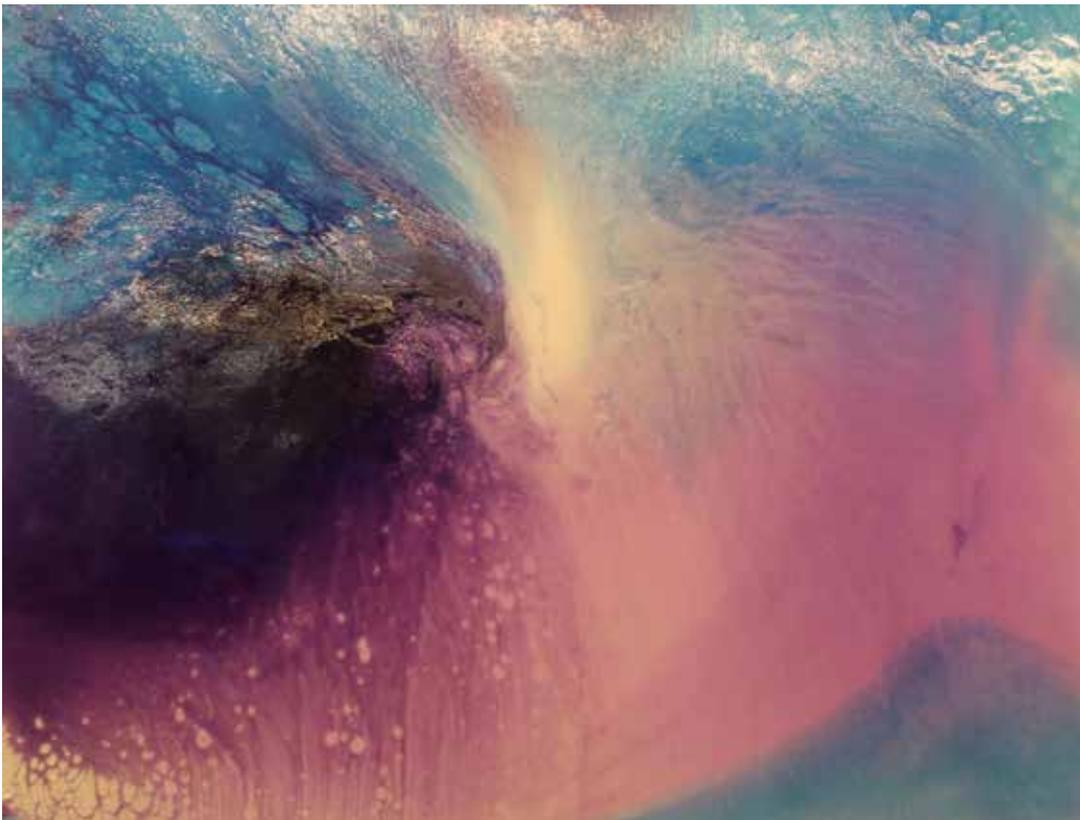
She locks the door behind her and places the keys in her coat pocket, hearing their familiar jangle. The sun falls behind a row of trees off in the distance, leaving a clear pink sky behind. The

farmlands that span the horizon look bigger than they usually did. More spacious. Walking over to the sign that is boarded up on the front lawn, she pulls out a red sticker from her bag, and smiles as she presses down on the 4 letter word sprawled across the face of it.

She doesn't dream of him anymore. The last dream she had of him was a month ago. He was pounding his fists on the low ceilings and narrow corridors of their house, begging her to tell him the way out.

And so, she did. ■

Claudia is the 2020 recipient of the ACU writing award.



Vanessa Brigante
Year 12 · Kolbe Catholic College

Colour

Acrylic Resin

MEND A BROKEN SOUL

Angel Catayong · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

G laring at her window, her downcast reflection stares back, she feels unappreciated and worthless. To relieve her sadness she takes a walk before dawn attacks her thoughts.

Standing at the stoplight, she is witness to a stranger struggling to navigate their steps, in shock and disbelief that no one is assisting the frail old lady as she crosses to the other side.

Worried a car may collide into this frail elderly lady, panic sets in, without haste, she musters up the courage to guide this frail lady to her destination.

In that moment of haste, it's as if time stood still. After what seemed like forever, this challenging obstacle to guide someone to their destination, resulted in success and gratitude as they both reached the other side. From this moment, she expects nothing in return.

That moment of short lived success and gratitude passes, reality hits, dawn breaks, and her thoughts attack her once again. Her current state of depression starts to creep in.

As she slowly paces along the path, kicking some rocks, something hits the back of her shoe. She turns around and sees the lady that she just assisted not long ago; she stops in shock.

"I'm thankful that you helped me when no one else would, if it weren't for you I would've lost my

balance or would have bumped into something dangerous," the lady gratefully tells her. "No one really helps me these days but kind souls like you are the reason why I still have faith in humanity."

With a gentle smile on her frail face, the elderly lady remarks, "I appreciate you and I respect you. The world needs more good souls like you and although my vision is not what it used to be, I see enough of you to help me remember you and this moment forever."

Her heart melts and tears form in her eyes, those words and that gentle gratitude are truly the comfort that she needed most.

She used to look in the mirror feeling worthless, like a mistake brought into the world, but now she looks in the mirror with a smile on her face, whilst a positive aura radiates from her as she feels loved and appreciated.

She understands that to win against the thoughts that attack her, she must never hesitate to muster the courage to do that which she thought was undoable, that which she thought was impossible and that which challenges her to do good.

Who knew that a kind 'thankyou' and a gentle 'I respect and appreciate you' from a complete stranger, could chase sadness away and cause one to respect themselves again, and even mend a broken soul? ■

WALLS

Gyan Valenton · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

“You need to snap out of it!” My eyes zipped towards the coffee-deprived grumble owned by an overwhelming female figure, dressed in a tailored black blazer. She stared down on me, which chased my gaze to the floor. Her words drilled through me causing trembles in my head, shaking the designer-brand sunglasses that darkened the living room, off-balance, with the buzzing lightbulb spotlighting me.

“I’m sorry, mother, I think I’m just starting to feel depressed”. My mother’s gaze intensified, causing me to hold my words like holding a cough to avoid embarrassment.

“You’re not depressed; it’s all in your head. You’ve got a great life: you take up the responsibility of other’s feelings, staying quiet and not having any need to burden anyone. I’m tired; go make my coffee.” I stalk on, making mother’s espresso, removing my sunglasses to rub my tear-filled eyes as they fogged my sight. Am I pitifully looking for attention? I gave my mother her espresso, and I mouthed ‘For you’.

I turned around, and she smiled, “Doesn’t pleasing people feel great?” I trudged to my room with my glasses growing, body shrinking and consciousness ebbing away. Pleasing people is exhausting.

Dark clouds encompass the sky outside my window. Incoherence peppered me, as I leaned a shoulder against a wall, surrendering myself to exhaustion. I flinched as a sudden knock rang from the door, followed by a voice.

“Mary, it’s me, Danjiro; let’s talk.” I sat down on my rocking chair searching for something to do.

“I just can’t.” I yearned to open the door. “I’m... just too tired, and I don’t want to bother anyone.”

Danjiro slipped a plan for a banner under the door. “Can you help me design a banner for my club? You’ve got an eye for colours.” I gripped on the armrest of the rocking chair tighter.

“I just don’t find colours fun anymore.” Danjiro scoffed. “Come on. We urgently need this as it’s due tomorrow.”

“I just think I can’t handle it.” I rocked on the rocking chair. “I’m just going to mess up; I’m sorry for being useless.” Danjiro slammed his fist on the door.

“You’re impossible! Get off your rocking chair and do something! Rocking on that chair is like worrying, it gives you something to do but gets you nowhere. Now, open the door for me!”

Silence enveloped my room. I got up and opened the door. I peeked at Danjiro’s sun-kissed face with

his still-damp black hair wafting chlorine after his morning swim.

“I’m just depressed, right?”

He pondered, rubbing his chin. “Of course not. You’re overthinking, and besides, it’s only a phase, so why worry about it? Calm down; everything will be fine, and it’ll disappear when you don’t worry about it.” I nodded. “Go for a walk, it always helps me.”

I floundered about the park inside the city with passersby, resembling silhouettes, judging me and making me wince. I sat down on a neglected bench, rusting in the middle of the park, and stared at the entrance. Suddenly, a light appeared—a male figure with an exfoliated face. My eyes ran away, and yet, I gave in to the temptation to stare at him. The figure waved towards me, everything darkened as the sun spotlighted me. He approached...

“Hello! My name is Mark Kolisnychenko and thanks for noticing me.”

I flinched as he addressed me.

“I’m sorry, I’m just not good company.” Mark smiled. “I told you my name, now tell me yours.” I twirled my bedraggled umber-black hair for comfort. He inhaled and tilted his head. “Let me guess. Your name must start with an ‘S’ because you have a beautiful smile.” I chuckled.

“No, my name is...”

“Peach because you’re too sweet.” My cheeks grew peachy-pink, and I crossed his soft metal-grey eyes.

“Mary.” I stepped back as he stood in an uncomfortable range. “I’m sorry if I’m just not a good company. I’m in a phase where I’m constantly sad, but I’m okay.”

His metallic eyes stared back, unblinking like a hawk. “I know you’re not, I can see you’re uncomfortable with me so close to you.”

I began to tear up. My sunglasses fell off, and I cowered under my palms.

Mark continued, “Begin setting up boundaries by telling me where your comfort space is.”

I did as he suggested and reached out in arm’s length. “That’s my comfort space but it feels like I’m building walls for myself, which makes it hard for people to get to know me.”

He paused, idle on the bench. “I suppose.” He absent mindedly flipped his ungroomed coffee-brown hair and continued, “However, walls create a safe space where only those who scaled up the walls can get to know you. I respect that.”

I respected that too. The sun shone down and my smile warmed the afternoon sky. ■

CREATIVE PIECE ON RESPECT

Jacob Dee · Year 10 · De La Salle College

“We’re going to be late!” Max shouted. Cole’s eyes were set, motionless, he stood there like a statue. Cole shrieked as it glanced back. His reaction caused him to fall backwards on to his bottom, his eyes still wide open like an owl, still trying to process what just happened. “What are you doing?” Max giggled. “Get up,” Max demanded, quickly regaining authority. Cole got up slowly, dusting off the dirt from his trousers.

“Ouch, that hurt,” Cole uttered rhetorically, acknowledging the delayed pain he felt.

“Come on, let’s go... now!” Max boomed. Cole, still eyes focused on the old wooden mansion, continued his journey to school.

For Max, the school day was like any other, boring and bland. However, for Cole, he found it difficult to focus, concentration wasn’t an easy skill for him to master usually, but today was different. When the final bell rang, the boys united outside, walking on their way home. During this time, Cole realized he had to tell Max what was bothering him. “Max, I need to tell you something,” Cole announced in a tone that would highlight the importance of the situation. “This morning, on the way to school, I glanced over at that freaky abandoned mansion... I saw an old lady, staring at me... Through the window,” Cole stated nervously.

“Whatever! Nobody lives in there, you know that,” Max responded.

“I thought that too! Until today,” Cole argued. “Alright... How can I prove it to you?”

“How about we go inside? That sounds fun,” Max added.

“Are you crazy?” Cole gasped.

“No you are! And I’m going to prove it to you,” Max answered.

Max marched towards the mansion. Cole, like the good friend he was, followed along. Eventually, the two boys had made it outside the mansion. They both simultaneously watched each window, waiting for movement. “Someone lives in there, don’t go in!” Cole pleaded.

“Nobody lives in there! Haven’t you heard the rumours?” Max questioned. “I’m going in.” Max swiftly opened the metallic rusty gate, he walked

along some pebbles laid on the ground, substituting for a pathway.

“You’re nuts!” Cole shouted.

“Come on wussy!” Max screamed, not accounting for anybody to be inside. Cole rolled his eyes, once Max had reached the small decking in front of the door, Cole began walking down the pathway.

The boys both went inside as the door was left open, Max still leading the way. The ancient wooden door creaked similarly to the gate. They took numerous steps inside, walking in one direction. They took steps, one by one across a red carpet set on top of the dusty and creaking floor. “This place is cool as!” Max remarked.

“Come on, let’s go. You proved me wrong,” Cole stated in a nervous way.

“Yeah I did, but, now... Since we’re here, let’s go explore,” Max responded. Max stopped tip-toeing in at a slow pace and began racing, completely certain the house was empty. He encountered a large wooden staircase. He laughed and then sprinted up the stairs, skipping steps when he could and ultimately creating a large ruckus. Once he reached the top he stopped, rotated and faced Cole. Cole gasped, he looked as if he were about to faint.

“I’m calling the police!” an elder woman shouted, eyeballing Max on the balcony of the second floor. Max froze in fear, he felt very apologetic. Max began to ramble on to the lady about how he thought the home was vacant. It took time and a lot of convincing, but she eventually came to her senses.

“I’m sorry, this was all a misunderstanding,” Cole cried once Max had finished explaining.

“It’s alright boys, I forgive you. In future, be respectful of others’ property and others’ feelings,” She requested. “Maybe if you had listened to your friend and respected what he said originally none of this would have happened.”

The boys and the old lady continued chatting for a while. They became great friends and built a respectful relationship. The boys decided, once every few days, they would come visit her whenever she felt lonely. ■



Jesse Toman
Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Untitled



Poppy Hancock
Year 1 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Heart

RESPECT (YOURSELF)

Charlie Doyle · Year 8 · De La Salle College

Realise how worthy you are
Express yourself freely
Speak with thought and meaning
Present yourself in a way you want to be seen
Exercise your mind with positive thoughts
Consider how you make others feel
Tempt yourself to explore new things

Yearn to learn and gain knowledge
Own your own actions
Understand your feelings
Re-assure yourself that you matter
Smile as often as you can
Excite yourself by learning new things
Laugh at yourself whenever you can
Fly as high as you can, even when you can't
leave your home... ■



Hope Mercuri
Foundation · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Chameleon

HAIKU

Sebastian Fong · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Up in the mountains
Where the breeze is comforting
I relax myself

It was a cold day
There was lots of rain and hail
The skies were angry

The streets were blank now
No-one seeing each other
Cause of corona ■

THREE HAIKU

Caleb Sexton · Year 7 · De La Salle College

It is a warm day
In the season of summer
The bright sun shines down

Life is a cycle
It goes on for years until
We finally rest

Respect is a key
It brings the world together,
In nice harmony. ■

RESPECT

James McLisky · Year 8 · De La Salle College

Respect is a feeling towards someone or
something
Everybody expects it, but doesn't know when
it's coming
Respect isn't something which everyone will
receive
It comes at a price that you have to achieve
To be respected you have to treat people well
It doesn't come easy but eventually you'll tell
Respect is so sweet, but everyone takes it for
granted
It builds up relationships, but first has to be
planted ■



Perri Kennedy
Year 11 · Aquinas College

THE KING'S FINAL WALTZ

Lewis Cameron · Year 9 · Whitefriars College

The King swayed at the command of the song, all that could have authority over him during this moment. In each beat, all that Louis the Sixteenth knew was the rhythm and his partner. Marie was beautiful, as beautiful as the day they were married twenty-two years ago. When he was just focusing on the one he loved, it was nearly impossible to recall the crippling emptiness of the ballroom around him. On the day of his coronation, he and Marie had waltzed in this very hall, and in that moment the crown of the nation seemed to fade to the back of his mind. He felt nostalgic for the days when he could leave aside his kingdom and focus on the luxuries that all his predecessors had left him. If only they had given the same treatment to their people, he wondered if he would be dancing with other nobles. The pianist tamed the instrument perfectly, not a single note out of place, a beautiful melody that echoed throughout his blissfully clear mind. The song was reaching its conclusion now, he could sense. The peak of which it had once showered in was past, leaving its graceful end in his sight. No matter how well the pianist mastered this number, the tune would come to an end, he mused. Louis wondered if death were truly possible for such an incredible performance, as after all, in his mind it would reign eternal. But, then again, even if he were to live the longest of lives, the song was destined to be set to rest alongside himself and his wife. And, naturally, neither had a long life to look forward to.

Even if the song survived, he pondered, would they remember it the same way as he saw it? To him, the song was majestic. Though, he listened to the song in its greatest light but what of those who only heard of its grandeur from the gutters? Those who watched the pianist be paid small fortunes while they starved from the sidelines. Either way, the song was reaching its conclusion. He wondered how he himself would be remembered, the 'foolish king' who had desperately attempted to keep hold of his power.

He had not been lazy in protecting his throne, he had fought tooth and nail to help the citizens under his rule. But, at the end of the day, one king could not change the actions of his ancestors, nor could he wipe them from the memories of the people. It

was a strange feeling, knowing that he would be the last of his lineage. His son had already died years ago, and he knew that his daughter was too young to stand a chance at taking the crown, even if there was a trace of royal loyalty among his state. Here he was, the threat of annihilation of the crown swinging above his head, yet he was dancing with his wife. What more could he do now? He had passed enough tax, social and state reforms that the law had become near completely overhauled from what it was in his father's reign. There was nothing more he could do that the mobs outside his gate would hear, nothing they thought could make up for what had been done by the bureaucrats for centuries. Maybe they were right.

To his father, and his father before him, all the peasants of this kingdom were sheep, slaves to be used as they willed. Ironic, he supposed. To think that it was him who witnessed the revolution, the one who had helped the lower class. Well, there is nothing that can be done now, so why not enjoy the end while it lasted? He could do as much to stop the uprising as he could to slow a charging bull. As he heard the bells ring, the faint cries of his royal guard, he realised that the bull was now in full charge. He wished that he could tell his ancestors of this primal fear that was taking over. He wished he could have taught them to show respect, respect for the people that would soon take his head. The song was ending, and here he was dancing with the one he loved. He looked at the pianist, still diligently forming the piece. One would think that he was in a different world from the alarms and screams, that he had no idea of what was unfolding around him. Or maybe he knew exactly what had to come but would only face it with a grace fitting of one who played the tune. A soft smile appeared on the King's face, a feature that had not graced it for so long. He respected him, and he respected the nation that would come to be. He only wished that one day, someone would respect him as well.

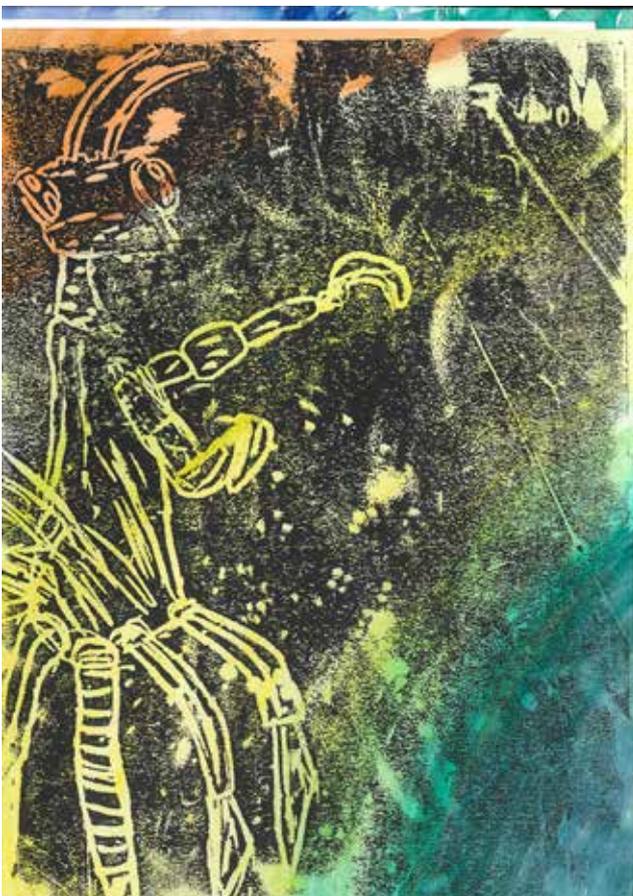
The world was burning around him, and he was gripping his wife. His kingdom was ending, and he was entranced in the rhythm of a song, a tear rolling down his cheek. He was at the end, dancing his final waltz. ■



Erica Connell
 Year 7 · *Marymede Catholic College*

Recycled Fashion Folio

In Design and Creative Technologies, we have focused on the fashion industry; exploring ethics, sustainability and future technology in clothing manufacturing. My outfit is created entirely from recycled items, as is my bracelet, earrings and necklace, finding a way to create wearable items that respect our planet.



Noah Fotinos
 Year 7 · *Marymede Catholic College*

Foam Print



Deanna Marychurch
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

Isolation



James Champlin
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

#nofilter



Holly White
Year 8 · John Paul College

Different but the same

We all have different personalities and we all like different music. We all have very different fashion sense. We come together because we were different. We respect each other's differences.

I HAVE A VOICE

Somer Randall · Year 9 · John Paul College

I have a voice.
It is a strong one,
A passionate one,
One yearning to make a positive
difference in this world.
And whether you like it or not,
I will use it.
I will scream and shout,
Until there is nothing left to say ■



Olivia Clark
Year 9 · Aquinas College

BOYCOTTING SWEATSHOPS

Rohan Parikh · Year 7 · Salesian College Chadstone

It is scorching. You have been crammed in a tiny room. Your body is exhausted after 16 forced hours of work. No time for food, water or rest. There is no assurance of your safety, injury could occur anytime and your reward: a pay of barely enough to feed your family. You don't have enough money to live on, but you just have to keep working and working and working otherwise you will die.

This is the harsh life of a sweatshop garment worker. They are not treated with social justice and are treated like disposable machines. This is all due to clothing brands that produce their clothes in sweatshops and therefore they should be boycotted or shutdown.

Sweatshops are places around the world in places such as Asia, South America, Central America, parts of Europe and Africa, where employees as young as five are hired for a minimum wage. This works out to be an average of about three cents per hour, up to 16 hours a day in poor working conditions. If they don't work overtime they can be physically or verbally abused. Poor air quality, extreme heat, exposure toxic substances and dangerous machinery can completely ruin the health of these employees.

Imagine the pain of not being able to feed your family. Not being able to give a formal education to your own children. Is this the sort of life you would want to experience? Then why do all these multi-billion-dollar companies think it's ok to exploit these poor people?

All the companies that make their products in

sweatshops and don't do anything to improve their policies should be shut down.

There are many well-known brands that produce their clothes in sweatshops, such as H & M, GAP, Zara, Uniqlo, Big W and Myers. Nike was once boycotted because it was discovered that they were producing their products in sweatshops. Nike soon had no other choice but to improve their sweatshop safety condition and their employee pays. This proves that we can make a change.

We can often forget how lucky we are. We can go to school, we have roof over our heads, we don't struggle to fill our plate. We have spare money to save the lives of millions of neglected humans around the world. WE have the power to have an impact over the world, if we act in this together. One way we can do this is by becoming more educated. Fair Trade Clothing and Ethical Australia Clothing can be used to check whether clothes were made under safe conditions and whether the sweatshop employees received a fair pay.

We can no longer accept that sweatshop employees are treated inhumanely and have to suffer in poor working conditions. Or that they cannot provide themselves or their family with essential necessities such as clean water, food and a secure shelter due to their low income. The ones causing this cycle of injustice are many popular clothing brands that must be held accountable. Thus, together we need to make a change together by boycotting those companies not willing to make a change and only buy from those who are in this revolution with us. ■

RESPECT POEM

Ruben D'Agostino · Year 8 · Salesian College Chadstone

What is respect.
Is it something we like to think we use?
Or something we do use?
Do we have what it takes to put others first?
Or, do we just quench our own thirst?
Does the need to have things our way,
Prevent us from making someone else's day?
Do we forget that others have feelings, being rude
and insensitive in our dealings?

A man's face is pressed against the rough
pavement.

On his back is a cop, kneeling, but not in prayer.
His knee is pressed into the man's neck.
Another cop stands casually by as the suffocating
man tries to remember what it's like to breathe.
The soon-to-be murderer seems almost bored as
crushed man's life is taken.
The broad daylight boldness of a professional
criminal, disguise by a badge and blue uniform.
He utilizes his privileged power to kill a man
whose life is valued less than a possible
counterfeit twenty dollar note.
Where is the respect? ■



Ayaan Ahmed
Year 7 · Salesian College, Chastone

A FAIRY-TALE WORLD

Miranda Liu · Year 8 · Emmaus College

He was shuffling home, head bent, a single boy in a throng of bodies, when he heard a mournful melody. Entranced, he followed the sound to its source, into a glade surrounded by the corpses of fallen trees, each a ghost-like shadow of its past. There sat a girl, illuminated only by the moon's eerie glow, playing on her bone-white violin. He fell under the spell of her song, and it transposed him to a heavenly realm, a mythical world of the past. And fairy tales.

A chorus of birdsong met the listener's ears as his eyes fluttered open. He was lying in a glade, surrounded by majestic, towering trees, the same forest he had entered not moments ago, but in all the glory of a bygone era. A celestial glow shone beyond the trees, ever curious, he ventured toward it, and the forest opened up to a lea of wildflowers, 'neath the dancing beams of a midday sun. He turned around on the spot; soaking up the beauty of the dreamscape. Stretching out to his right, further than his eye could see, was a vast, glimmering ocean that sparkled with life. To his left, loomed mountains of frost and snow. But ahead, was the rainbow meadow, stretching ever onward. Without hesitation, he plunged into the alluring flowers that smelt of sunshine and joy. The wind tousled his golden-brown hair, as animals capered along beside him. He spun and dipped, whooped and hollered as he raced through the never-ending field. The flowers beneath his feet never crumpled but bloomed when he past. As he ran, he tilted his head back and was instantly enthralled by the infinitely blue sky, adorned with wandering clouds and speckled with eagles that soared at an invincible height. A teasing breeze picked him up and carried him seaward. There, he rode atop dolphins and dove down deep, marvelling at the world beneath the waves, the coral kingdom. The pulsing of the waves echoed his own heart, beating as one.

All too soon, the sun was setting, bathing the world in various shades of orange. Amid the fading light, he wandered onto the beach and back to the forest, nestling down upon a mattress of leaves, a pillow of moss and in a blanket of bark. Looking up through the canopy he could glimpse fragments of the sky, now deepened to a faint violet and speckled with beckoning stars. It really was wonderland.

When he woke, the scene that met his eyes was devastating. The forest was full of men, with roaring machines that ploughed through everything in their path. He ordered them to stop, but his words fell upon deaf ears. He raced to the machines, in an attempt to stop them, yet they were always just out of reach. He stood, helpless, as tree after tree was torn down, crushing his soul piece by piece. Every animal fled; their homes destroyed. The beautiful flowers were crushed and crumpled under monstrous wheels. The once-azure sky was a dreadful grey, as if it was ill. Even the proud eagles had abandoned the realm. As the boy looked around, he could no longer recognise his surroundings. What once sang with magic and life was now but a barren wasteland, filled only by a haunting silence.

"Why would you do that?" He asked the world, his voice full of anguish "Why?"

But deep inside he knew: *Men of this world are greedy, they cannot see beyond their lust for money, they couldn't see the pain they had caused, the massacres they had conducted. Trees felled, oceans polluted and the life that they hold dying with them. All for no other purpose than man's insatiability. Yet, it still was not enough. They built cities and roads, factories and cars, leaving the air a concoction of poison. Little did they know that by doing this, they had written their own death sentences. Signed, sealed and hand delivered to the Grim Reaper.*

The boy crumpled to the ground, atop his ruined realm, cradling his head as he rocked back and forth, lamenting over what once was.

Suddenly, he was back in the bone forest, a silent tear falling down his cheek as the last straining notes of the violin lingered overhead. The girl set down her instrument, her ash-white hair framing her face, and her glowing eyes fixated on his. She spoke, each word a melody in itself, a ballad of hope and courage.

"I understand" he murmured. "I will make right the actions of my ancestors. I shall embark on a sacred quest, to write the ending to the Earth's story. A happily ever after, so that Mother Nature will finally get the respect she deserves." ■



Isabel Zheng
Year 9 · Padua College

Mother Nature

What inspired the idea of the piece “mother nature” was because of all the things that are going on right now, like deforestation, pollution, etc. i made this piece because i think we need to respect her a lot more than we are right now, many people really don't like looking at an information poster, or being reminded of all these things, so I decided to make a piece of art that is interesting to look at, and also can get the message across.

LUNAR NEW YEAR

Aaron Trinh · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

Once a year, at the end of January and the beginning of February, comes the festive season "Lunar New Year". My whole family and extended family celebrate Lunar New Year, where we all get excited and dress up in our traditional new costumes or our brand new bright coloured clothes.

Our cultural tradition is that we always celebrate Lunar New Year, where the eldest person is currently living at, in this case my great grandma's house. When everyone has arrived, the adults will start cooking our delicious traditional Vietnamese food and we all pass around gifts to one another. In the meantime, the children are all upstairs playing games and singing songs.

Once the adults have finished cooking, the children are asked to come down and gather with the adults. There is an altar in the lounge room where we have photos of our ancestors, as we give thanks by lighting candles and incense to pay our respects and remember them. After paying our respects, we all sit down to an amazing dinner.

The family gatherings are what bring us closer together and this can be very loud as we happily share talks and food. Our bellies are filled with

so much food, sometimes I think to myself I can almost burst out of my pants, rubbing my stomach.

The time comes to do our traditional greetings, this is a ceremony that is done in my family from generations to generations. First the adults sit down on the couch and the children say a small greeting to them wishing them happiness, health and prosperity. In Vietnamese this means "Con, chuc mung nam muoi. Chuc ong ba, mot nam vui ve, manh khoe, song lau cham toi, tien vo nhu nuoc, thuong con nhieu lam". Then, once I am finished I receive a red pocket which contains money. The reason why they use a red pocket is because red envelopes are considered to be lucky money for the year, this is a sign of respect in our culture.

As we come to the end of the night, this is where the fun really begins. The children and the adults pull out their red pockets filled with money and we start to play Black Jack, then uno, then the crab game and last of all put our singing talents on. But sometimes I try to block my ears as my aunt's voice is overwhelming to my ears, I laugh to myself. This can go on until 5 am in the morning OMG!! It is so exhausting, but it is sooo worth it, because we have an incredible time. ■



Max Diamond
Foundation · St Finbar's Primary School



Myles Martin
Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

TREAT OTHERS THE WAY YOU WANT TO BE TREATED

Ava Stravato · Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School

People often choose
To not put themselves in other people's shoes.
They disrespect those
Who they suppose
Aren't up as far
The list as they are.
Those people need to learn that
Disrespecting people because they're not the same
is despicable and that's a fact!

The people who make the world a better place
Are those who respect and care for others in any
case.
What you do to others around you,
Is what they will do to someone new.
You can make the world a better place
By not judging people because of their race.
They may be a different religion to you,
But you know that they need respecting too. ■

RESPECT!

Charles Skehill · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

Respect is something you have to show to others and that others have to show to you.

One reason you should show respect is because if you start demonstrating respect to others they will show respect to you. They will see you as a nicer, happier and better person. People will like to play with you and talk to you.

It is also important for others to respect you because then you will be safer and more comfortable around those people. Respecting others helps others to have trust in you and can count on you when they need you to do something for them.

My last reason why you should show respect is you should show respect to Aboriginals and other people that we have not treated well in the past. How would you feel if you were taken from your family? We need to show respect to African Americans, Aboriginals, Torres Strait Islanders and other people that we treated badly. Then they will begin to stop fearing us. We should treat others the way we would like to be treated.

Showing respect is very important in your life and other's lives because you will be looked at as a nice person, a caring person and a loving person. ■

RESPECT CREATION

Isabelle Smith · Year 4 · St Finbar's Primary School

Respect God's creation
from the land to the sea.

From the largest tree
to the tiniest bee.

Keep waterways clean so the
fish can be seen
and people can play happy as
can be.

For future generations,
let's all work together
and respect God's wonderful
creation! ■



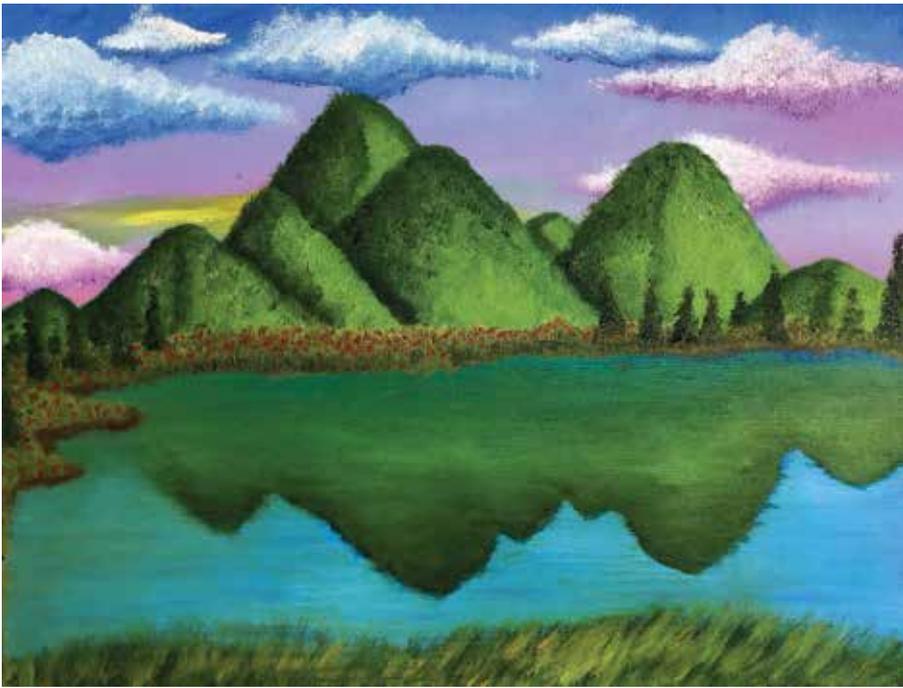
Hero Rosales
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Digital art



Nathan Furtado
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Digital art



Adela Marinjira
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



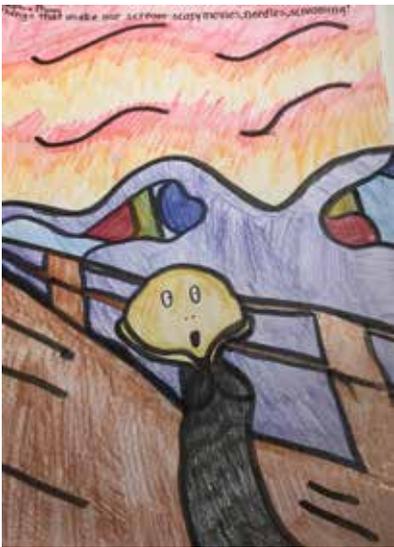
Monique Wroblewski
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Digital Art



Helena Carra
Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington

Things that make me scream



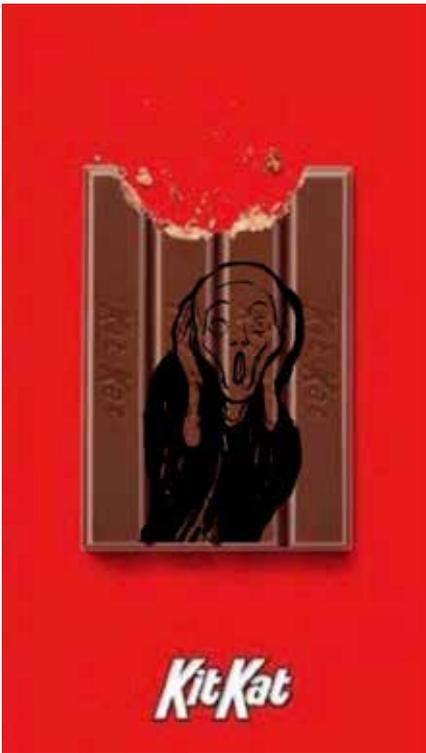
Sophia Pham
Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington

Things that make me scream



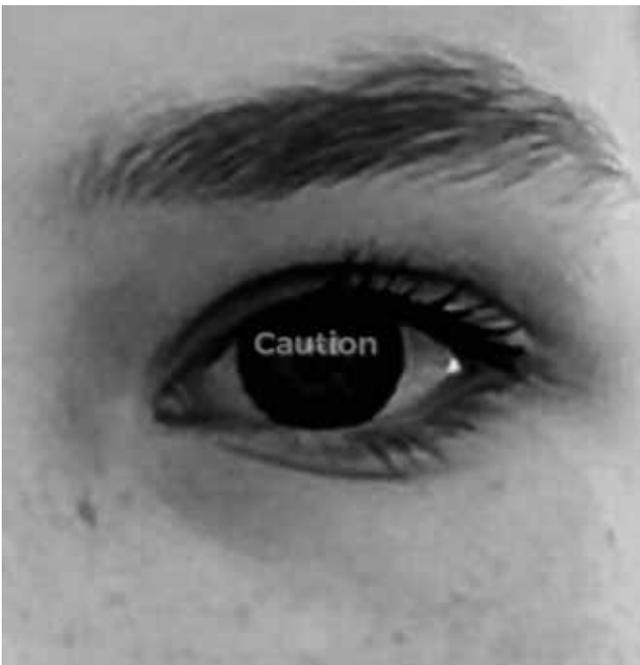
Madeleine Nguyen
Year 5 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington

Things that make me scream



Tara McFarlane
*Year 5 · Holy Rosary Primary School,
Kensington*

Things that make me scream



Emily Crunden
Year 6 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington



Julia Proctor
 Year 12 · Nazareth College

Our hidden not forbidden smile

I was inspired by the current world around me to create a poem/photograph that addresses the notion of wearing a face mask during the current pandemic. I wanted to metaphorically express that during these current times it can often be challenging to recognise the positives – such as a simple smile from a stranger, hidden by a mask – however, the greatest thing to remember is that we are all here for each other during these times and that out of respect for one another, we can collectively do our best to overcome the challenges that face us.



Thomas Guarino
 Year 10 · Nazareth College

Black Lives Matter

Inspired by the Black Lives Matter movement in the spirit of mutual respect and equality.

A GIFT NOT GIVEN

Ashley Arcigal · Year 11 · Nazareth College

She is often overlooked,
overwritten.
Never will you hear from her.
but, oh, how she begs
silently for compliance.

She is misunderstood,
coined as a reward.
few *deserve* her;
as if she is an object,
a prize, in the first place.

But to him, she is soft,
unspoken.
All he does with her
is learn, grow.
The way they should be together.

She is quiet,
does not ask for anything
from him—or you—
except to understand that
her love is *earned*. ■

THE RIPPLE EFFECT

Ashley Arcigal · Year 11 · Nazareth College

Little did he know
that the small boat he sailed
unknowingly
over to her

Would polish
the blue mirror
and reflect the sky
again

Would steer
fish to clearer waters

and let them gather
again

Would create such
a beautiful wake
and cause a cascade
silently

But little did he know
that the small boat he sailed
would make its way back to him
from her ■



Merlyn Jojy
Year 9 · Padua College

Respect the Sea

UNTITLED

Marli Di Pilla · Year 8 · Nazareth College

Inspired by the respect I feel for nature and the changes that appear with each season.

Soon, it would happen.
It did every spring,
once the trees reached peak bloom.
Each unique, refined petal
individually laced
with intricate but raw allure
would eventually swirl
delicately
toward the sidewalk
to diminish;
a piece of pure nature
disconnecting itself from the world.
My sister used to say
the flowers had served their purpose
of bringing beauty to the world
and were now ready to wilt.

They had done their job.
I looked up,
my eyes attentively followed a small pink petal
as it tumbled through the breeze,
spiralling to the concrete.
It pained me to see them fall.
It brought to the pit of my stomach
an ominous feeling
of memories I wished not to remember
and tears to my face
I wished would never fall.
The feeling pierced
deeper
and deeper
into my body
with each petal that hit the ground.
I miss you. ■

WHAT LIES BEYOND THE RED DOOR?

Marli Di Pilla · Year 8 · Nazareth College

This piece was written during an extended period of online schooling with restrictions in place in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Sitting alone
in a room absorbed in dust and madness.
Where the truth shall prevail.
The darkness fills the void
of psychedelic insanity.
Deep in the soul of the room
beats the heart of a monster.
It waits in a grotesque, gruelling silence,
its breath pounding.
My legs are swamped
with the inability to operate.

For the length of time spent in this room
is unknown
to me.
To the world I coveted,
to which I shall never return.
Fate has bound me.
Once again I'm left behind
in the dust absorbed room,
waiting for the monster of truth
to consume me.
It inches nearer and nearer.
The king rises.
The red door awaits. ■

RESPECT

Madeleine Coley · Year 7 · Padua College

We are hidden away in the shadows,
Unspoken, unseen.
No one even notices us,
But respect is all we need.

Our worlds are separated,
Torn apart by the past.
You promised us equality,
But since then time has passed.

I am crying out to you for respect,
But you can't hear me.
You ignore us and look the other way,
We need respect, can't you see

You lock up my dreams, hopes and wishes,
You lock me up too.
When will you let us free?
Free to do what we were supposed to.

Why won't you listen,
Listen to our pleading.
And not a day goes by,
Where our souls aren't bleeding.

All we want is respect,
We shout until you hear.
But do you listen, no.
And this is what we fear.

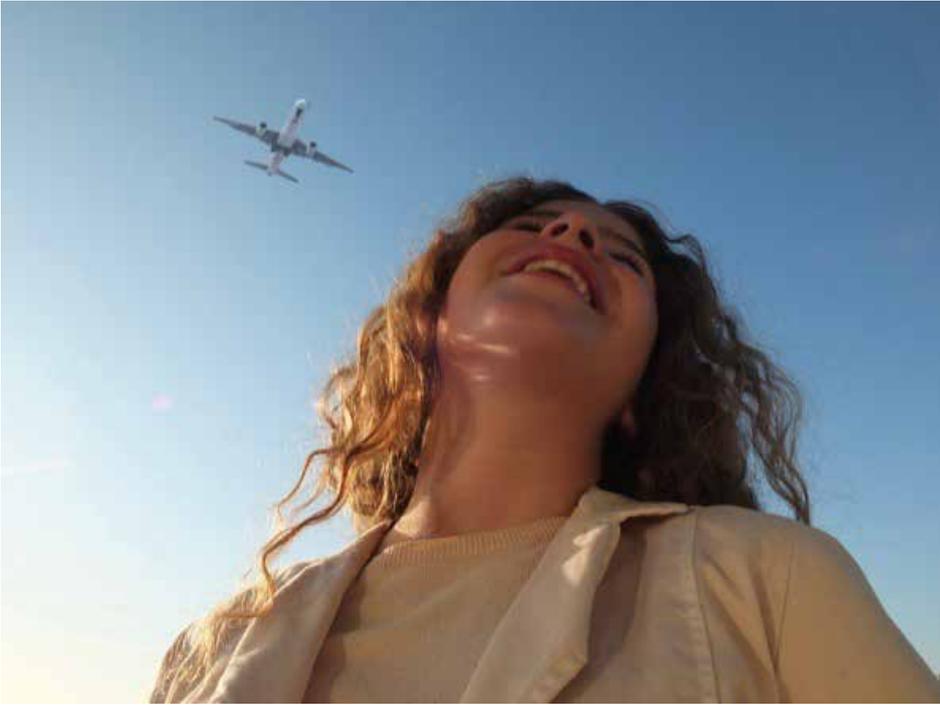
We are all brothers and sisters,
But do you treat us like one, no.
All we want is respect,
But no one knows.

We whisper quietly,
"We need respect."
We hope you listen,
And make the world correct. ■



Amber Berry
Year 11 · Padua College

Remote



Clara Rauter
Year 11 · Padua College

Time



Clara Rauter
Year 11 · Padua College

Where you are

MY TALKING CAT

Grace Keleher · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

I'm awake, sitting in my bed when I hear a "Good Morning!".

I freeze, and look around. Mum was out of sight and the talking seemed to come from right next to me. I said "Good morning."

"Aren't you paying attention?" the voice squeaks again.

I turn around. Nothing. "That's strange," I think.

The only other alive thing in my room was my cat, Belle. I'm staring at her when her mouth begins to move and I can hear a "Hello!".

It's official, my cat can talk. Belle explains that at a certain age, one in 10,000 cats develop Talking Cat Syndrome, a disorder that makes a cat speak like a human!

I'm surprised at the fact, so I decide to tell Mum.

But on the way, another one of my cats, Daisy says, "Stop right there. You think only Belle can talk, but every cat in this family has Talking Cat Syndrome, abbreviated often as TCS."

I freeze. The event is terrifying. Now I've just found out that an estimated six cats in my family have TCS. This is more terrifying than the coronavirus lockdown, riding my first thrill ride and going to the dentist combined, and multiplied by 10.

I must tell my Mum now.

I walk up to Mum, and she says, "I don't know if you've heard, but I was patting Daisy and she talked exactly like a human! What's happening?"

Then, on the news, it's announced that the number of cats with TCS has been underestimated. Now, one in one hundred cats have been diagnosed.

Great, this is what I want! NOT.

I wake up, turn around, and it's 4:30am. The event was just a dream. Relieved, I go back to sleep.

The End.

Please note: This is a narrative. Some events mentioned in paragraph 3 are real, and so are the characters, but it is purely coincidental if TCS is real. ■

COLOURS

Felix Arnott · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Red, oh, red.
As bright as a bed.
Red as a rose,
and a very big nose.
Oh red!

Yellow, yellow, Yes it's yellow!
Shiny like gold,
but no not close to bold.
Bright as a banana,
light as the sun,

for a good old egg pun.
Oh yellow!

Blue o, blue,
oh, how I adore you,
blue o, blue,
as sticky as glue.
Dark & light,
all through the night.
Blue o, blue,
how I adore you. ■

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Mia Sax · Year 5 · St Mary's Hampton

Do you remember a time when the world was put under complete Lockdown? Do you know whose fault it was?

Mother Nature. However, she has a reason for it.

For thousands of years, she has been suffering from the effects of pollution but now the tables have turned.

What if she passed a slight breeze of pollution onto the humans to see how they would cope?

Her plan was ready, her decoy set, it was time for revenge...

The journey the Bat experienced was excruciating. By the time he landed on earth, he was half dead, but to his good luck, he was whisked away to a wet market. "Master will be so pleased with me" he mused.

After many days, he was set free. When his strength had returned, he raced through the layers of thick atmosphere until he collapsed, attempting to splutter the story to his master.

"Well done Bat", he said in a kindly tone, "we only want them unwell enough to stay inside". ■

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Tom Hart · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Nine weeks ago, we were all allowed to go to school and work and play. Then suddenly everything changed and we got told to stay home the very next day. There was a horrid virus called COVID-19. It was unstoppable and really quite mean.

It was on every headline, article and all over the news. The Premier stated to stay home and you weren't allowed to choose.

We missed sport and friends and our Nanny's and Pa's. We weren't allowed to travel or even go very far.

People started raiding shops for toilet paper, cans, everything they could. Thousands of people lost their jobs like everyone said they would.

But COVID-19 was a bonus for nature and the sky, before this, all nature was possibly going to die.

There have been other good things during lockdown like kicking the footy, movie nights and staying up late. Now finally, after such a long time, we can finally see our mates. ■

REMEMBER TO BREATHE

Jordan Nidras · Year 7 · CRC Melton

“W-what’s happening?” A villager stammered. The water rose around Lensice’s feet, but she stayed as silent as ever.

“If we don’t do something soon, we’re going to drown!” Another villager screeched, the water rising rapidly. Still, Lensice stood in peaceful silence. A villager noticed a nearby house and sighed in relief. “The house! The house! The houses aren’t filling!” He exclaimed in excitement. “Get into a house! Through the window so water doesn’t get in!” Lensice’s parents grabbed her arms and dragged her inside a random house, panting wearily.

“Lensice! Do you not care about what happens around you?” Her mum growled, slightly aghast at her daughter’s nonchalance.

“Come on, you know I hate talking... it hurts...” Lensice murmured dejectedly.

“If I hear that excuse one more time...” Her mum began furiously but was interrupted.

“You’re getting my voice checked. I’ve heard it a thousand times, mum.” Lensice whispered, barely audible. She was choking and holding back tears. How amazing it would be to speak without pain. Suddenly, she ran to her room and wailed, trying her hardest not to scream out.

Meanwhile, Lensice’s father, named Tom, peered out a window. The water was well above his roof, and he saw a broken cliff which wasn’t there before. He then realised that the water wasn’t rising, the city was sinking. Panicking, he hollered: “Nicole! Come here! The news is on!” He suspected the news was going to talk about the water.

“Coming!” Nicole, Lensice’s mother, called out.

Sure enough, Tom turned on the news and the first thing to come up was the sinking of the village.

“So, we’re sinking, the water’s not rising...” Nicole muttered.

“Yes, yes. If you try to go outside, remember to breathe,” Tom confided. “We’re leaving here tomorrow.”

The next day...

“I’m... not... leaving...” Lensice murmured, as indignant as she ever was.

“Yes, you are! We all are!” Tom said with obvious annoyance. “Do you want to stay in this underwater town?”

“I’d rather stay here than go with you...” Lensice muttered.

“Too bad! It’s not your choice!” Tom and Nicole yelled in unison.

“Fine! Leave me here then. I’m not going with you!” Lensice yelled on top of her lungs. Immediately she collapsed.

“Okay then... we are leaving you and your lame excuses here!” Nicole declared.

“...Good.” Lensice whimpered in pain. “Goodbye, then.”

“Goodbye.”

Tom turned the door handle and opened the door. Water came rushing into the house rapidly, filling it and leaving Lensice’s parents screaming. A single tear of fear fell from Lensice’s eye. That tear led to another, and then another. Soon enough her eyes were pouring crystal despair. The house did not fill any slower. It continued to fill to the ceiling. Closing the door, Tom, Nicole and Lensice swam to the top of the water- which, conveniently, stopped filling with just enough room for their heads- and took a deep breath in.

“Seriously, Tom?” Nicole howled, losing control of herself. “How are we supposed to get out of this town now!?”

“Can you swim?” Tom challenged Nicole. He knew that she couldn’t resist a challenge.

“You’re on.”

Exactly the response he wanted.

With that, Tom and Nicole left their daughter in the house. She had no chance of survival. Unless...

She had an idea. A crazy one, but still an idea.

Lensice swam out the house toward the town hall. She opened the door, allowing herself and a small amount of water to enter the building, and closed it as soon as she could.

“Mayor!” She mustered up all her strength and spoke at a normal volume. “I have an idea as to how we can save everyone in the town!”

“What might that be?” The Mayor asked, turning around, and spilling his coffee.

“Well, remember Knaught?” Lensice said excitedly.

“Yes, I still have his telephone number.”

“We could use his submarine! It can rescue people a group at a time and soon enough everyone will be somewhere else!”

“Great idea! I will call him immediately. For now, you go back home and get some rest,” the Mayor chirped.

“My house is flooded...” Lensice choked.

“Hmm... stay at the hotel. You needn’t pay, I’ll cover it.” The mayor remarked.

“Really? Thank you!” Lensice said, her voice wavering. “I’ll see you when plans are made.”

A few weeks later...

“Remember, only 10 people on at a time! The thing is small!” Knaught yelled, agitated by the people ignoring him. Group by group, people entered the submarine, which was parked inside the fire station, getting brought to the shore so they could find a new home.

“This was a great idea, Lensice,” the Mayor commented.

“Thank you,” Lensice replied confidently.

“How is the medication working for your voice?” The Mayor asked, hoping it wouldn’t pain her to answer.

“It’s working really well! I have a voice now!” Lensice answered blithely.

“That’s great! Hopefully, it gets even better overtime!” The mayor responded.

The submarine resurfaced for the last time, and the final remaining villagers stepped out with a relieved look on their faces.

“That’s that, then,” Knaught said contentedly. “Everyone’s finally safe.”

“How much will this cost?” The mayor inquired.

“On the house,” Knaught replied, smiling. “I don’t charge for saving lives.”

“Good to know,” Lensice giggled.

“Lensice! You’re safe!” They heard two voices call out. Lensice turned around and saw her parents darting toward her.

“Mum! Dad!” Lensice yelled happily.

“Your voice... I-it’s working...” Nicole said, holding tears. “You aren’t whispering anymore!”

“It’s medication,” Lensice replied. “The Mayor bought it for me.”

“You saved our daughter’s voice!” Her mother cried.

“We will be eternally grateful,” Tom added.

“You needn’t thank me. It was the least I could do for Lensice. She had the idea of calling Knaught to save everyone,” the Mayor said.

Looking at Lensice, her parents said in unison: “We’ll never abandon you like that again.”

Lensice beamed and threw herself at her parents.

“We should get going,” Nicole said.

“Goodbye, then,” the Mayor remarked.

“Goodbye.” ■



Sarah Nottingham
Year 10 · Padua College

Jelly stitch



Sam Richards
Year 11 · Padua College

Eucalypt



Sam Triandafillou
Year 12 · Padua College

Society

RESPECT: A DEFINITION

Bonny Cortese · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

EQUALITY

Respect for equality requires the equal treatment of every human being. This means that there is no place for discrimination of any kind, against age, race, gender, sexuality, religion, disability, just to name a few. Because of someone's appearance or inner beliefs, they should not be ridiculed or speculated upon. It means not confining someone to a label and seeing the label before they see the person. Treating people with equality and respect makes a safe environment, where people are able to share their feelings and opinions without having to be fearful of how they will be viewed and treated because of it. Creating surroundings and places where people feel comfortable and valued helps build connections and relationships, founded on respect. Primarily, it is treating others how you wish to be treated.

NATURE

Respect for the environment entails caring for the land and the creatures. We are currently destroying our planet, consciously. We are fully aware of the irreversible damage that we inflict on the Earth every day, yet we are ignorant enough to believe that if we ignore the issue it will disappear. If we stay on this path, the earth will simply be destroyed. This is the point in time where things can still be changed for the better and we can work towards building a more sustainable future and way of living. The helpless animals on Earth are going to suffer because of our actions, but we can intervene and change this path that we have set on. Climate change is not just an assignment for our leaders to solve, it is a burden that we must also take on ourselves and make little changes in our lives to benefit our future and planet. It is also acknowledging the animals in the world and the work they do throughout their lives that benefits the health of the Earth, and instead of destroying their habitat and clearing trees, we should be protecting them and prioritising their needs.

HISTORY

Especially in Australia, respect for the past requires acknowledging our mistakes and learning from them. The mistakes that affected the First Nations people of Australia can never be changed but working towards healing the relationship and connection to our elders is the first step. They respect and care for the land as it is a part of their past, present and future. The land provides shelter, food, and life, and in return they care for it. We can learn from their extensive knowledge of this nation from the individual Indigenous communities. It is vital that we work alongside the traditional owners of this land and aid them in keeping this rich culture alive. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples make up a significant portion of the history of Australia, if not all of it. The language, the culture, the knowledge needs to be preserved. It would enrich the lives of all Australians to understand our Indigenous Australians and continue our learning from them.

ONE ANOTHER

Respect for one another is somewhat like the ideals of equality, but a little more specific. Treating each other with compassion and kindness. Nearly every person is fighting a battle that you know nothing about. Most can put up a brave exterior and you would have no clue idea what they're going through. To be able to take a step back and put yourself into their situation then you might gain some perspective as to why they may be behaving the way they have. If someone mistreats you, you are still able to treat them with respect as their actions are more of a reflection of them and what they are facing. Respect for one another also includes yourself and being able to understand your self-worth without having to look for it in others. It is also the strength to remove yourself from difficult situations. The bottom line is, spreading kindness, even in the smallest ways can show respect – simply by complimenting someone, smiling or helping them. ■

RESPECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

Kyle Thompson · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

Respect means to show admiration towards someone or something. Showing respect is important because it helps people feel safe and to express themselves. In this short story I hope to deliver the message that all of us should respect the environment and the world we live in. Earth is a very special planet because it's our home. The environment consists of trees, plants, animals, and even us as humans. There are some people that don't respect the environment which is a very poor thing and unacceptable. Some people are polluting, burning fossil fuels, cutting down trees, destroying animal's habitats, and much, much more. In this story I'm going to be explaining how to look after the environment and what happens if we don't.

Why should we respect the environment? If we all respect and look after the environment, we would have cleaner waters, the air would be healthier, it could improve human health, we would have a healthier ecosystem, we could prevent global warming and climate change, and most importantly, we would live longer. There are a lot more examples on why we should respect the environment. Respecting the environment will lead to good things and benefit us as humans.

How can we be respectful to the environment? We can do a lot of things to respect the environment. We can start recycling, that way we wouldn't be wasting anything; we can use solar panels so we don't waste electricity; we can do rainwater

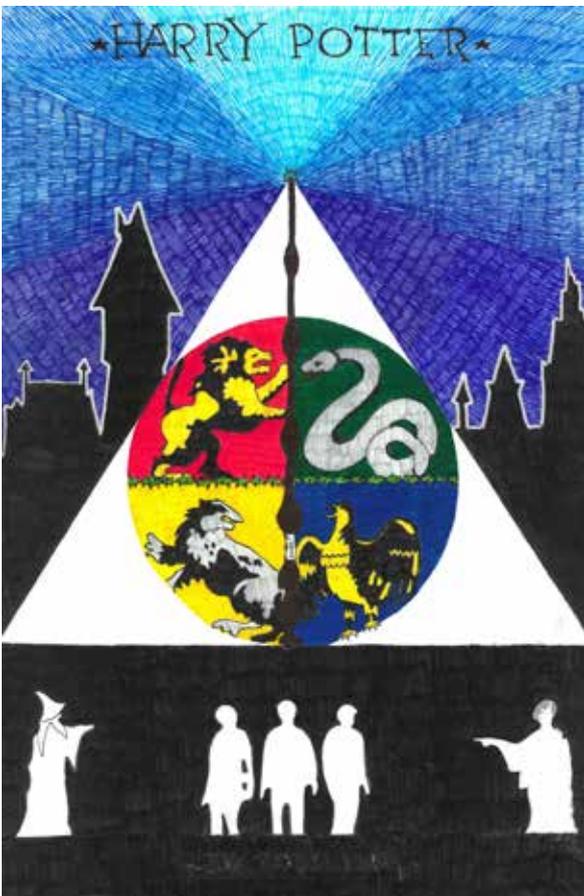
harvesting so that we can save water instead of letting it run off. We can create a compost garden so the vegetables and fruits we eat would be healthier, we can have shorter showers and waste less water, and we can start using organic products. These are just a few examples of how we can respect the environment but there is much more. There are a lot of organisations like the Team Trees organisation. This is so we can act against deforestation and save the trees. There are many more organisations that look after nature.

What happens if we don't respect the environment? Many people don't respect the environment. If everyone wasn't looking after the environment the air would be polluted and it would be harder for us to breathe. A lot more animals would die because they aren't getting enough water and it would contain toxins. If we litter in the ocean sea creatures would die because they'd mistake plastic for food and get choked or suffocated. There would be more deforestation and less oxygen because there would be less trees. Foods would be unhealthy and would contain pesticides. We would die easily because the air we breathe is toxic and the foods we eat would be unhealthy. It would make us bad and crude people if we didn't respect things.

Respecting the environment is very important. Respecting all else is commendable and makes us better people. ■



Leaia Fono
Year 8 · St. Peter's College



Michaela Lorenzin
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

RESPECT

Egan Lai · Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

There has been a lot of chatter, about how Black Lives Matter.

The COVID-19 generation will never forget, No surprise, it's mass hysteria, what do you expect?

Some say it's from an unkind environment.

Some say it's from old fashion racism.

I say it's just plain fear, pushed into first gear.

A head filled with rising new cases, I need a mental health break, to dream of new places.

In a world of open and closed doors, there is a secret to end all wars.

Stop staring at the closed door, of lost freedom and hope.

The open door of opportunity is where we will find our religious trope.

We each own a key to unlock our brain.

Do it quickly before we drive ourselves insane.

What opportunities could we elaborate?

Slow things down and learn to collaborate.

Family time at home, and friends on Zoom, online communication is now in full bloom.

Bill Gates gives us Microsoft Teams, with unique teamwork taken to the extreme.

We study on our own more independently, and listen together more intensively.

We should search to improve our situation and set an example for the new generation. ■



Kyan Daffy
Year 9 · Xavier College

UNTITLED

Brady Ryan · Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

BANG! BANG! Timothy fled, he had no time to think about anything at all, he just ran. This had been happening since the start of the war. Flee, rest, come back into town, repeat. Each time he went to a different spot in town to avoid walking into battles between the two enemies and to find his parents.

He continued to run, gunshots from behind him blaring in his ear. He had to get away.

After running flat out for about 10 minutes, although it felt like an hour, he had to stop and take a break, or he was probably going to collapse. He looked around the countryside, he had been there before, but it didn't look like it normally would. This time all the fields were as quiet as a library, only the whisper of the wind was in his ear now. He figured that one of the enemies must have retreated because he couldn't hear the gunshots anymore.

Timothy spotted a cave which he recognised. He decided to go towards it. He was very cautious with every movement, he didn't want to be spotted by anyone. As he was walking, he found a parachute on the ground, this made Timmy petrified, he knew that someone had been here recently.

He continued to creep towards the cave. As Timothy approached it, he slowed to a stop, because he could hear someone in there. He crawled towards the edge, he didn't have time or energy to think, so he went to the outside wall and peeked in. What he saw was terrifying and confusing at the same time.

He could see an enemy soldier, but this soldier was not like he had seen before. This figure was lying down, sleeping and had his leg up. Timothy predicted that the man had injured his leg. As he continued scanning his eyes around the cave, he found a rope near a bag. He crept in the cave, got the rope and tied the man up.

Timmy sat there for 10 minutes, contemplating what to do. He couldn't think straight because he was starving, all he could think about was his stomach. Timmy decided to wake up the soldier, and he planned to ask what kind of food the man had. Before he went to do it, he saw a gun in the figure's pocket; a small handgun. Timmy decided to use it as a threat if he did anything unwanted. As he pulled out the gun, ID fell out of the soldier's pocket and Timmy discovered that he was dealing with a man called Igor. He put the ID back, turned the safety-lock on just in case he accidentally flicked the trigger, then woke Igor.

"Hello, my name is Timmy," greeted Timmy.

"Hello, my name is Igor..." replied Igor.

"What are you doing here?" asked Timmy. He agreed to find out as much about Igor before he said anything about himself.

"I am an enemy soldier, however, I don't want to be here. My family were killed in a war years ago, I am the last one left." Igor looked down, "I came here hoping to escape my hometown in Russia and be accepted by a family here, but I landed on the ground awkwardly, and it looks like I've broken my leg."

Timothy trusted the man, then he had a genius idea. He had forgotten about his hunger.

"I've got an idea," Timmy started, "I am stranded on my own, and I was separated from my family when the war started. If you help me get to my family, we will bring you in and you can stay with us."

"I'm in!" said Igor, "What are your parents' names?"

"Boris and Catherine Donald," Timmy replied, confused by the question.

"You're joking!" replied Igor to the puzzled Timmy. "I know exactly where they are. Don't worry, they are in good condition!"

"That's fantastic!" said Timmy, he never thought he would hear those words, especially from an enemy spy, "How do you know where they are?"

"Well, I was walking around the area that they are in and I saw a house. I crept up towards it," explained Igor, "I looked inside the window and your parents called each other by their names. I then peeked at a table and saw the name Donald on a shirt, so I figured that was whom I was dealing with. Then a helicopter picked me up and landed me here."

Some time passed since that moment, Igor and Timmy found a rover and drove around town to the other side where Igor knew Timmy's parents were.

As they continued driving down the dirt road, the pair and their trusty land rover approached a security stop. Timmy quickly hopped in the back and pulled a blanket over him. Igor and Timmy had already planned for this situation; Timmy's orders were to lie down as flat and straight as a plank, so it looked like the beat-up floor of the rover was a little bumpy. He was also told not to get into the boot because the security guards check the boot and not the middle row.

It was now Igor's chance to make his country proud and turn Timmy in.

"What is the password please sir?" said the officer in Russian.

"You will lose," replied Igor.

"Move on please," declared the officer.

"Um, excuse me officer. I have... I-I-I," Igor was stumbling, he didn't want to do it, "I have run out of ammo, do you have any spare?"

"No way," shouted the officer, "Get out of here!"

Igor drove on, relieved that he didn't turn Timmy in.

After about a minute, Igor called out to Timmy:

"You can get back in the front now," Igor said.

They drove on until they reached a house.

"Well Timmy, we're here..." Igor looked down.

"Oh, really!!" Timmy exclaimed, "Come o-"

"Igor, what's wrong?" Timmy asked.

"What if your parents don't like me?" Igor asked, nervously.

"I'm sure they will," Timmy replied, confidently, "Hey, come on. You have done your part of the deal, now it is time that I did mine!"

Timmy and Igor hopped out of the car and knocked on the front door. Igor was still injured, so Timmy had to assist him walking

"Who is it?!" asked Timmy's Dad on the other side of the door, a gun in his hand.

"Dad?"

The door opened...

"Timmy!!!!"

"Dad!" ■

BUSHFIRE POEM

Emilio Thirard · Year 5 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

The cracking sound of the falling trees ring in my ears.

Help! Please! Somebody!

The desperate voice of a lonely child screaming from inside a burning home.

The wailing of sobbing people floods my ears and The smell of burning houses suffocates me.

Boom! The deafening impact of a burning car silences everyone.

When the blanket of smoke clears, people's eyes widen with fear.

Remains of burned houses fill the street

And the once beautiful bush turned to ash.

With what little strength they have left,

They gather up the remains of their houses and families.

And together, they press on to rebuild the strong community they once had. ■



Alex Georgiou
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College



Ava Flewin
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College



Addison Howe
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

ACHILLES

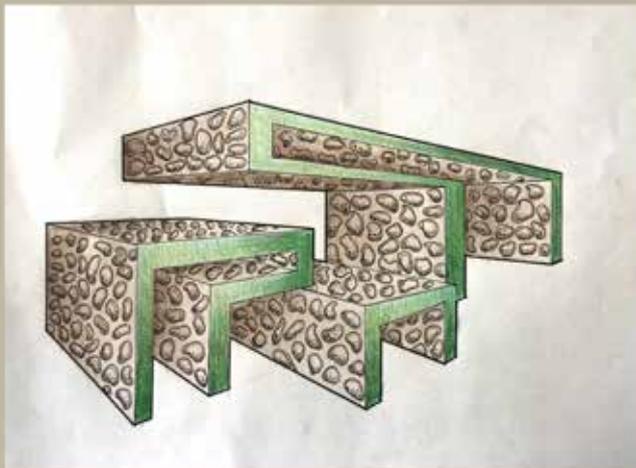
Sarah Verberne · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

His is a warrior of much regard
The Trojan war was where he stared
The Myrmidons looked to him with much heart
Their leader and saviour, The Hero of Gods

His reckless rage went unchecked for days
He killed those days with little leeway
Decked in armour, he slayed and slayed
Until daybreak when the deed was payed

His personality reveals
His enemies always kneel
But their hatred of his ordeals
Lead them to shot him in the heel

The tale may vary from time to time
But his story installs fear in those who dare to
undermine
He will not take pity
For our warrior is Achilles. ■



Pavilion Design

By Brydie May



Brydie May
Year 10 · Aquinas College

Pavilion Design

HERA

Rose Pearson · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

He gives me gifts
Pretty trinkets,
Any girl would like them, he tells me with a
 condescending smile
I look at him, my face blank
Don't you like them? He asks, feigning concern,
 hurt
My face remains expressionless
(It's safer this way)
He is enraged, shakes me forcefully by the
 shoulders

Why don't you like them?
He demands an answer, shouting now
Aren't they enough for you? What is enough for
 you? Why are you never satisfied?
His voice rises, a thundering roar filling the room.
 The words pile upon each other, he is relentless
Outside lightning cracks, the sky is darkened with
 his anger

Enough, I tell him
He pauses. Realises how tight his grip is. Relaxes it
You know I love you, he tells me, his voice
 suddenly soft
We could be happy together, you know, he
 continues, wheedling
We really could, we complement each other, he
 says, gentle, persuasive
(I wonder what he means by that. Perhaps he
 thinks I'll shrink myself down to make more
 space for him, silence myself for his voice that
 fills entire rooms)
I love you, he repeats

I don't tell him he has love confused with lust
Do not ask how he could love me when he has
 been through six women already, discarding
 them as he grows bored
I do not compare him to Bluebeard, or not out
 loud at least
Do not tell him I refuse to become the seventh
 of his brides, I will not be hung from a hook
 on the wall as they were, their lips blue,
 their bodies pale, lifeless, their expression
 permanently frozen to one of fear

Enough. I repeat, more firmly now
His smile fills me with unease
Alright then, he says, calmly
He leaves, taking the storm outside with him

I am on edge after
It's not like him to give in so easily, to give in at all
If anything he'll see it as a challenge

His friends reassure him,
Tell him girls love to play hard to get
He's heard it so many times he actually believes it

Days later he approaches, injured bird in his arms
(I know better than to trust him but the bird is
 near frozen)
Give it to me, I tell him
His smile is cunning, he says he wants to make
 sure it recovers
He invites himself in, steps through the door
It closes, a careful click

He forces himself on me and I am powerless to
 stop him
I am weighed down by the shame of it all
It would be quite the scandal if this got out, he
 says, a thinly veiled threat
We could get married, he suggests with a shrug
It would be the perfect solution, wouldn't it? he
 says, his hand tightening on my knee

What else can I do?
We are married in June, the perfect summer day
(The perfect couple, or so they think)
He delivers perfect vows
(He's had 6 weddings to perfect them)
My friends congratulate me, tell him how his
 persistence was oh so romantic, the perfect love
 story
(It wasn't)

His hand grips mine too tightly as we step out,
 into the sunlight. ■



Brianna Scott
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College



Hazel Burford
Year 10 · Padua College

In Time

THE ODDEST SENSATION

Miles Hart · Year 8 · Mazenod College

If I was to be completely honest, I've never really had much respect for myself. I never ended a day proud of my achievements or my skills, usually because I didn't have any, at least no useful ones. But today something strange happened. Something that had never happened before. It was as if I became possessed. Some peculiar force took over me. It was indeed an unusual experience. The thing that happened today, while most may find it a bit bland, was that today I came out of school feeling proud, quite proud. It was the oddest sensation, the pride that is. More specifically self-pride.

The situation that resulted in this feeling was a simple one at first. It was lunch. I was sitting on a bench on my own, as per usual, when I caught a glimpse of something occurring only a few meters from where I was sitting. Three larger kids, probably from year 10, had surrounded a young boy who was sitting on the bench about 5 meters to my left. I know it's probably odd to know the lengths between the benches, but after spending so much time in one place you tend to realise or think about things that would seem quite boring to the average person. Anyway, I didn't think much of the situation at first. But then I saw it happening all the time, although from a distance. I continued to eat the lunch I had sloppily made for myself, pretending as if nothing were happening. But as I glanced back over, I managed to catch a glimpse of the kid's eyes. They were red with fear, but at the same time almost lifeless, as if he'd done this hundreds of times before. Oddly he reminded me of myself. It's not like I was bullied, I was simply ignored. But something about the desperation, the sheer emptiness of his eyes, it just entranced me. It felt as if I had lost control of my body.

I stood up. One of them noticed me but turned away. I took a few steps towards the group. I began to make out their conversation. The younger student's responses were short, one-worded and almost emotionless. At this point, I attempted to sit myself back down but I couldn't stop myself. I was about an arm's length away from them now. I took another step, now mere inches from them. And then I did the unthinkable. I opened my mouth.

"Hey."

It wasn't a very threatening greeting at first, but once I realised that they weren't paying attention to me I had the genius idea of speaking louder. "Hey!" this time I shouted. They were all looking at me now. "Back off," I responded to their confused expressions sternly.

They laughed. "I'm sorry?" questioned one of them.

"You heard me, back off."

I don't know why I continued to speak. I should've just walked away. Sure they would laugh but I didn't care. But for some reason, I cared enough about this random kid to speak up. They were all facing me now.

"Leave him alone." I continued. Why did I have to continue? They looked at each other. They didn't take me seriously.

"It's okay, you can leave, I'm fine." It was the kid they were picking on. He wasn't okay so I didn't move from where I was.

"Shut up!" the large one shouted at him. "Can't you see we're talking here?"

Then I made the worst decision I could've possibly made. I grabbed the large one and shoved him. Why on earth did I have to shove him?

"Hey, get your hands off me you little runt!" he was genuinely annoyed now. He then proceeded to push me back. He pushed me a lot harder than I pushed him. I had ended up laying on the concrete. They assumed that I was done now, so they turned back around. But unfortunately for me, I most definitely wasn't. I proceeded to pick myself up, and this time shoved the smallest one. He was weaker and ended up falling forward. They then turned around again. This time they were really angry. They then proceeded to shove me to the ground and took turns in allowing their feet to meet my torso.

A while later I was seated outside the vice principal's office. The other boy was seated next to me. He hadn't been hurt. I was holding three ice packs to my head, stomach and rib cage respectively. I could hear the shouts of the vice principal from where I was seated, though I couldn't hear anything of the other boys. Whilst I was getting beat up a teacher had spotted us. She rushed over but the boys ran away. Luckily, the boy who they were picking knew the names of all three of them.

While I was at the nurse's office I heard them talking to him about why he had never told anyone about them. He said something about it not being unusual for him and how it had almost become a routine. Pretty stupid routine if you ask me. After that, we were both sent to the vice principal's office and were seated outside.

After a while, the three of them walked out of the office. They gave both of us nasty looks as they departed. The vice-principal proceeded to question us on the situation. I could barely speak at the time

so the other boy, whose name I would later learn to be Michael, explained the majority of the events that took place. He invited Michael into his office and dismissed me. And as I proceeded to walk out, Michael called out to me. “Thanks!” He said it with more enthusiasm than I knew he was capable of producing and when I turned around he had an unusually large smile on his face. “Don’t mention it!” I replied.

Then it hit me. It was the oddest feeling. Something I’d never felt before, though it didn’t take me long to realise what it was. It was pride. I was proud of myself. It confused me at first but as I allowed it to set in, I felt almost, temporarily at least, fulfilled. It’s not like I had won the fight or anything. I was beaten to a pulp, but for some reason, at that moment I respected myself more than I ever had, and it felt wonderful. ■

HADES & PERSEPHONE

Alessandra Crowe · Year 9 · *Star of the Sea College*

He came when the sun
Was shining,
He came when the flowers
Suddenly died,
Crumbling in my arms.

He came and took my hand
Pulling me away,
He came and took my smile
From my face,
Captivating me into a trance.

He came with purpose
Trudging through the meadow,
He came and took me with him
Like a dog tugged onwards by its master,
Angering my mother.

She came like a thundercloud,
Her face screwed with rage,
She came calling out to me
To return home
With her.

But I went, like the wind, I went
And I was happy for a time.
Until the springtime came around again.

I begged to be freed from the sunless world,
To reunite with my mother.
So I returned.

And I did so for many years,
He came and kept me happy,
She came and kept me centred.

Then I went, like the wind, I went
and I never came back. ■

TODAY'S SOCIETY

Kyle Rao · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Today's society isn't perfect.
Arguments, riots, protests everywhere.
So many different types of people and opinions that
no one knows what to believe.
Sometimes, I think, I think about why
we can't accept different viewpoints.
About how much of a difference there'd be in society
if we could show simple respect.
Sure, there are positives
less poverty, longer lifespans,
yet those things are meaningless
if respect is invisible.
We could give it a try,
remove insecurities.
Everyone would be equal,
everyone would have enough.
Respect would return,
from the everlasting holiday it seems to have.
Maybe, just maybe, we could pull together,
bond as an equal race.
Stop fighting, arguing, protesting, bullying.
Solve our problems together,
equality would be restored.
Imagine a life where you could walk outside,
and just smile.
Because in this world
we'd have a society which would be
an accomplishment.
One that humans could be proud of,
if we, for once, could just acknowledge
other's opinions and simply accept them.
Society wouldn't be perfect,
but maybe it would value respect. ■

RESPECT FOR MY FRIENDS

Roland Ung · Year 8 · Mazenod College

I think I have friends who really care for each other,
we love one another as if we were brothers.
We comfort each other when we are feeling lonely or
down,
to make a smile out of a frown.
We share our food and our eyes open wide,
at the delicious food that we just tried.
Even when we are getting heated,
we make sure the other isn't mistreated.
We all joke around and that is when we connect,
and those friends are the ones I respect. ■

RESPECT IS A TWO WAY STREET

Anthony Khuu · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Once upon a time there was a quiet kid,
He attended a school founded by the Oblates,
Polite and never interrupted he did,
However, he barely had any mates.
Rumours were abundant and brought about,
A nerdy loner who was exceptionally weird,
However, his dedication in school made him stand out,
Something that made him different from his peers.
Polite, kind, treated others with respect,
I asked why he was the way he is,
Academically he was adept,
And all he had to say was this:
"Respect is a two way street,
You must be kind in order to receive kindness,
Say 'Hi' to the staff, help out the community
And in time you will receive what you give – it is only
righteous." ■

RESPECT

Lucas Yap · Year 8 · Mazenod College

Some superheroes,
like ones in comic books,
always include rescuing,
with their charming and good looks.
But some superheroes,
they are humble and they are wise,
and are able to help you,
should any problems arise.
They have superpowers,
like healing and super speed,
they will always help you,
no matter what your need.
Everyday,
Every time,
These are the brave heroes that cross the line,
to take care and help those in need,
wherever they may be.
Maybe even you and me.
So when I see these heroes
you know what to expect.
Thank all the medical workers,
and show them your respect! ■

THE GREATEST

Gabriel Chen · Year 9 · Mazenod College

The great help of our health care.
In this time of passing, we are grateful.
Thank you to those at great risk.
We are in continuous amazement.
Confoundingly, doctors steer.
Alacrity shines through our fine nurses.
Coughs and sneezes they are there.

The sun will always shine on our doctors.
We will not always gleam.
Honour and glory is what we strive for.
Regard is what we look for.
To aid and cure is what we all search for.
The tonic helps warms our soul.
Their admiration is our sparking flare.

Hours upon hours; gone.
The time used to help the sick is countless.
We lift them up in our hearts.
From the darkness, 6 to 6 until dusk.
From their sacrifice we flicker.
Without the practice we weep.
Day after day their drive is acclaimed.

In shields of gold they stand fard.
As bright as the glinting, succour to us.
To be like them is beyond.
As the hours pass by, we are in joy.
Their golden hearts see our need.
As they risk everything, they are our heroes.
The great help is in respect. ■

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN – TOBI AND ME

Josephine Papafotiou · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College



This image shows the beauty of the abandoned golf course during the first COVID-19 lockdown in Melbourne. An oasis in the middle of suburbia. Tobi is dwarfed by the landscape but he owns it nonetheless.

As the sun journeys around its orbit, across frozen rivers and spicy deserts, it finally moves away from the skyline of my sturdy window. All in a day's work. A golden hue trails behind its path, making its comings and goings known to all who can see – and paving my way in ecstatic luminescence.

My long arms find the sleeves of my puffer and loosely fiddle on mismatched woolly socks. The dog's quick breath is warm. I hug him tightly to my chest and, together, we take a step over the paint stripped wooden supports that make up the fence. One small step for man, one giant leap for mankind.

We step further through trees, past the stale shrubbery and the world is open green.

Here, the earth curves, mimicking the waves of the sea – uphill, downhill. The past is locked beneath its many layers. It holds the truth of another world, fossilised fragments below the surface; buried deeper as time grows wiser. Like an old friend to a newborn, Time recalls the days before eyes bore holes of sand into these curves. Holes cut out like a jigsaw, removing the simple people we once were, before harmonic peace was replaced with a secluded oasis surrounded by a concrete jungle.

The fierce salty breeze is replaced by another, more

forgiving. But this place too, has the purifying cleanse of water. I bathe in the aroma of pine and eucalyptus, soaking in God's final gift of light to this day.

The golf course holds me captive. Familiar humming gives way to a new paradise, as the bustling of insects buzz through the air, the wind carries them where they need to be. And I need to be right here. Here, where the ground cracks in delight under my feet. I'm a visitor, a stranger in a puffer and woolly socks, and yet I am home.

The trees ruffle their leaves just like the birds, who make their nests in their outstretched, protective arms. Their lullabies bless the land goodnight, a routine, when I am here and when I am not. As this world lays to rest I follow suit, for they know better than I, the mysteries of the sky.

I call over to my dog. It's a call for "Tobi" that weaves its way through the branches to where he is. He is running. He has not stopped from the moment he leapt out of my arms. The fence too, is his barrier and beyond it he knows an infinite world. He sees green, smells earth and tastes the flowering dandelions; but not I. My mind soars like an eagle beyond the blanket, towards the stars, further, further. I see the map from the sky. I see all the fences and the roads beyond Tobi's infinite universe.

I can only be lost in its wonder for so long.

Once, the ground was so fraught with cold. It tried to cover itself, keeping warm in a guiding mist. The mist, white and dense, provided shelter from the grass to the tall leaves. Like a framed painting of white, bordered by trees either side and at the bottom, a single green fence.

Now, the thick, heavy clouds make way for a roof of stars. A clear night unlike those before. Tonight is warmer, but not as warm as another.

Once, the green grass turned to yellow and the green leaves turned to grey. The sun burned like fire and the only water to be found formed on our foreheads. Tobi couldn't run anymore. The dirt scorched his paws and there were no more butterflies to chase. His tongue rolled out of his mouth and it rolled and rolled uphill, downhill – without him. Tobi didn't want the world of fire. He preferred four walls with a fan instead, a fan driven by coal fires. Embers. More ash drifting from the flames. But he didn't know that.

Now, the sky is clear. I gaze upwards with Tobi alongside me. His body radiates warmth and forgiveness. As I look, I see the constellations. The Southern Cross. The Centaur. The Keel. I see them and they see me. But they also see the other side of earth, a reflection of the universe beyond.

Once, the aroma of rain weaved through the branches. The dew settled on the leaves and drizzled down to the dirt. The worms awoke, squirming in their beds. The raindrops fell lightly as they enjoyed their shower, but their delight was overturned to another. They flew down in a rainbow of colours, together. Fluffy pink and grey galahs. Radiant green, red and yellow lorikeets.

Silky white and yellow cockatoos. They gobbled up the earth's treat to them, right from their beds.

Now, we lie under the wings of an ancient gumtree. It might tell us stories of the Dreamtime, if only we knew how to listen. But we don't. And finally, as the birds nest in their branches and the foxes deep in their burrows, it's just me in my woolly socks with a tired white puppy by my side. The sun has journeyed away in its orbit, but Time tells us, like clockwork, it will be back. And so will we.

Our greeting flickers, a dim electric globe on the veranda. I remove the puffer, hanging it on a bar stool. It's hot inside. Too hot. Tobi waddles towards his basket, lying down with a muffled snort. My phone emerges from my pocket. I rest it on a placemat of green money – as green as the prosperous world I emerged from, as ill as the one I've entered.

It tugs like a boat moored to an anchor. I am summoned back to where I am told I should belong. The chandelier shatters and fractures the remaining light of day. The sharp lines of the writing desk slice the air. The towering antique cupboard creaks. And the piano remains with its lid wedged open. They all wait for me.

Masked faces return to my oasis, golf clubs in hand. The loud black box celebrates a new normal. What do I celebrate? Tobi strides frantically from his basket to the door, his basket to the door, his basket to the door. And back to his basket. My short-lived paradise is no longer mine. It is not a world surrounded by paradise. It is paradise surrounded by the world. ■

COASTS (29TH MAY, 11:41PM)

Abigail Brooks · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

Explanation

This piece is a time capsule. It doesn't reflect how I felt for the entirety of lockdown, but it came off the back of one important feeling I wanted to remember forever. I was sitting at my desk thinking about how quarantine has shown me how sensitive I am. I just remember my heart collapsing when I looked out at the moonlit park behind my house and told myself that it was okay, thinking: *look, look, nature is forever reshaping itself and so am I*. Then I wrote 'Coasts,' and I wrote it all in that one night.

One of the hardest things about lockdown was watching the year repeat its days.

It was as if I could reach my hand down into time and scoop up the copper-tinged powder of autumn a year ago in another place. I could smell the rain that came one morning as I trudged home, falling just a few inches from the pavement. I leaned my face in to feel it — existing in two worlds at once, knowing it had to end and not caring.

On occasion my hidden memories would emerge, pulling me in like a planet engulfing a handful of space dust. Sometimes, when the light struck at odd angles, I was catapulted back into my childhood; a soil-buried kaleidoscope of days spent wrapping myself around the universe behind our house. I watched as I prodded the pond nymphs (believing myself some omnipotent god), little knees awash in green, thinking the whole, shining world was mine until lunch.

I think I was compensating for the experiences I knew I had lost. For some time I didn't know how to face the feeling that life had somehow cheated me, like I was sitting in the shade of an orange tree and watching the fruit fall about me in piles, wasting their sweetness. I could only press on, trying to hold it all in my simple hands. What I did or might have preferred to have done. Soothing my history. Passing the same walls each day. Trying to hold myself close.

Now it is evening, and music laps into the cove of my room. The space between my body and

the bodies of the ones I love has grown. They are separated by coasts. I'm angry, of course, because I have to love from a distance. How can I piece myself back together? *Put the thought on a little boat and push it towards the horizon*, goes my thinking. *Wave goodbye now as it floats into the night*. I move through the motions, but it never works. Not really. So I breathe in the salty sea mist, stretch my arms across the wide expanse, and walk alone along the rough, shifting sands of everything.

And I feel that I am no good but for my gentleness, my ability to lie right down in the middle of the flood and make a home of it. Quarantine has destroyed some important parts of my life, and I am lonely and very easily damaged — but it has made me realise that I'd rather live with a tender heart, letting the ocean rise and swell and fall over itself, because I know the waves will retch up some shell for me to hold up to my ear so I can listen better. I can look anew.

I don't have to remind myself that I'm living through a pandemic; that there is something larger than us probing the human flock, stocking the tombs, pooling in the streets. In storms it flurries forth — threads, advances, dilates, eats flesh of reason. At times I dream that I'm peering through the curtains of my bedroom, down two stories, and a spindle-shanked skeleton is standing there in the streetlight. He stares into some middle space, birds landing one after the other on his shoulders, and he tucks each one into his rib.

The fear is my reality — *our* reality — but on the other side of that is how I can reshape myself. I have spent so much time alone that I've remembered who I am. And I don't mean my alleged 'real name.' All names are made up by someone else. When I'm in my room at night, sitting quietly in a moonbeam, or when I'm in bed looking up through the darkness, I know that nameless person within me.

So I sit here in the evening, listening to the slow, descending whistles of night birds, and there is air coming in through a chink in the window. I turn my face to feel it. The air is so cold, so fresh that I take it as a sign that I should keep going, just as I am. ■

CURSED

Ben Kelly · Year 7 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

Lucas glanced at the girl sitting at a table across the classroom. She didn't seem all too sad. Not to most people. But Lucas could see more than most people. It was his gift, you might call it, to see the pain people were in, though I'm sure he'd disagree.

He didn't know the girl's name. She had deep green eyes that seemed to be fading by the minute. He hadn't taken much notice of her before. But today she was in pain, and that was when his curse was too strong to ignore.

The girl was unaware of this boy sneaking looks of pity at her across the classroom. Her attention seemed to be on her friends, who spoke words that once sounded rich and mature, but now sounded petty and dirty. They were doing an impression of her, contorting their faces crudely. The girl seemed fine with it. She wasn't.

Lucas noticed the way she looked at all of them, seemingly encouraging their impressions but really loathing every word.

Seeing this saddened him. He looked away from the girl, hoping to forget what he had seen. But just like every person whose pain he witnessed; the pain was still strong. He could feel it still, raw, and lonely pain. He told himself that it was nothing. That he should just move on like he usually did.

But Lucas found that the longer he ignored her, the more he knew her pain would strengthen.

He wanted to be free of this curse. He wanted it more than anything. But the more he thought about it, he wondered if the only way to get rid of it, was to help the pain. It sounded like a stupid idea to him, but nothing else had ever worked before. He would try.

He looked over to the girl and instantly he felt it again. Pure and unprecedented sadness. She sat hunched, head atop her arms now. He saw her friend lean down and ask what was wrong, though it was obvious this friend didn't care for a truthful answer. The girl quickly lifted her head from her arms and said she was fine. The friend had already turned away. She was not fine.

Lucas tried to get her attention from across the room, signalling with his eyes. After some time she seemed to be looking in his direction. Her face was barely recognisable. Just a girl shaped loneliness. Lucas wasted no time in contorting his face to mock the girl's friend, who had been conducting most of the cruelties.

The girl seemed disconcerted for a moment. Lucas sat meekly still, rather embarrassed. Nothing happened. Lucas was ready to find a hole to quietly hide inside of, when the small smile spread across her lips. ■



Neomi Gestano
Year 8 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

#wecantBREATHE

OFFICE BULLIES

Linuki Herath · Year 9 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

We live in a confusing and emotional world, where there are fewer and fewer public examples for our generation about the right way to treat people. Especially here on Earth. The more you walk around here the more bullies you meet. Every. Single. Day. They only know how to break other people and feed off them to feed their desire for power and authority.

To Our Office Bully,

You think that you're superior, you think that you have all the power against us. Draining every drop of joy and happiness from our toes to our head. You continue to pull and drown yourself into this greediness for power and authority and it just grows as fast as your curiosity, to see how much you twist and pull us like puppets. But you see, when I see you, I laugh. I laugh when you say that people *respect you, adore you, love you*. You've fooled yourself. Bullying, disrespecting, tormenting, and manipulating us, doesn't mean that we respect, adore, or love you. *We fear you. We left you.* You forgot to respect us, like we respected you. Respect us as humans. Kindness, respect, loyalty, appreciation. This is what makes a great person. We respect them without feeling bound by chains and the need to forcefully respect this person to please them. We respect them because they respect

us back. Just like a Rajiv Doraiswamy said, "The tallest buildings will be nothing without the foundations." You cannot build relationships with others if there is no respect. Let me tell you a story and maybe, just maybe, you might understand why your world came crumbling down in the end.

Mr. Barney is my manager at my new job. A person who radiates with joy whenever you meet him. We have a receptionist named Sally and she is Muslim. Not long ago, she told us she had been verbally abused at her previous jobs for being Muslim. Moving to her current job, she thought it was best to stop praying at work for her safety in the community. Mr. Barney continued to check up on Sally and reminded her that if she needed to talk to anyone that he was willing to listen. Slowly but steadily, she began to feel more open with Mr. Barney. Mr. Barney even encouraged her to pray at work again. He also said that any culture is welcome in the company. Do you see the difference between you and Mr. Barney? He earned her respect and gained her trust. He knew straight away that it would be tough, but he continued to try to gain the trust of his colleagues. Mr. Barney got a promotion for his dedication to his colleagues. Mr. Barney declined the offer and said, "Being respectful and trustworthy is priceless." I hope one day you will learn that respect is earned, not given or forced. ■

OLD FRIEND

Lorenzo Encena · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Ivan burst open the door and rushed into the decrepit home. It's all different now, his childhood home looked so unfamiliar, so broken. The furniture seemed displaced, like a huge shockwave blew it away. After all, everything changed when it happened. Thump! Ivan was startled, he thought the house was abandoned. Quietly, he sneaked upstairs, crouching down and moving towards his old bedroom.

He peered into the room, that was when he saw a woman staring straight into his eyes. Frightened, he stumbled back but he tumbled down the stairs, falling on his back.

Looking up, he could see the woman staring intently at him. She was quite skinny, her ribs poking out and her eyes looked cold like the winter. She looks familiar Ivan thought, he felt like he knew her for some reason. That was when he realised it was Natalia, his childhood crush.

"Natalia? It's me Ivan." He explained. Natalia approached him cautiously. Ivan backed up and got back on his feet. "Hey, it's alright—" Quickly, Natalia charged at him, knocking him into the kitchen. She drew out her knife and gripped it tight, her knuckles turning white. Ivan was shaking, he looked around and got an idea. He dashed towards the window and jumped out, landing on the shards of glass that had been blown out years ago. The glass scratched him, luckily he wasn't bleeding. Ivan got up again and ran off into the town he once knew. The warning signs didn't scare him, after all he had gone in there before and survived. Entering his old school he felt like someone was watching him, although he didn't see Natalia follow him.

Ivan walked down the now empty hallways, memories of old days rushed into his brain. He remembered playing hide and seek around the yard and in his classrooms with Natalia. Hiding in such cramped and tight spots.

"Hey Ivan!" Shouted Natalia, "I'm coming!" Ivan hid under the teacher's desk, looking under and seeing her feet approaching. She silently walked towards the teacher's desk, passing it. 'Ah that was a close call' Ivan thought. "Found you!" Natalia looked down at him, smirking.

Ivan was brought back to reality when he heard a loud crash from the other end of the hall. Ivan quickly entered the nearest classroom. The chairs and tables were flipped on their side as if they all ducking for cover. He hid behind one of the desks and watched as a shadow appeared in the hall.

The shadow drew nearer and she appeared,

Natalia. Her knife shone in the light of the falling sun, it illuminated her face. She entered the room. She was not the girl Ivan fell for all those years ago, she seemed different, a total stranger to Ivan.

"Ivan, come out, come out wherever you are!" She playfully sang. Ivan was now shivering, the once cheerful girl he once knew was replaced with a psychopath. She passed the desk where he was hiding and Ivan took the opportunity, he pushed her and ran out. He continued running down the hall, turning a corner but he tripped on a body.

Ivan was horrified, on closer inspection there were parts gonna and bite marks all over. Shocked, he still continued on, knowing that Natalia is coming.

He sprinted across the hallway and broke through the door, he ran as fast as he could away from the school. Ivan ended up arriving on a cliff, overlooking the lake. He remembered this spot, he always went to this spot after school, with her.

"Ivan, this place is cool!" Exclaimed Natalia, her eyes sparkled in the sun light.

Ivan looked at her, he loved that smile, the joyful look in her eyes.

The cliff overlooked the lake, the small village and the sunset, it looked unreal.

Back in the good days, back before the first blasts that would come.

Crunch, crunch, crunch. Ivan had realised that time had flew by. He turned around, Natalia standing there. This time however, Ivan had no exits, nowhere to run. This is it Ivan thought, he backed up onto the ledge. Natalia, or whoever she was now, got her knife ready, poised to attack. The sunset illuminated them, a final confrontation. His hands trembled, he stood paralysed facing her.

Natalia approached him, knife steady. She slowly walked towards him getting ready to strike. Predator and prey, Natalia and Ivan. She went in and attacked, she began slashing at him with her knife. Ivan dodged the first strike and the second, but he was caught on the third. Ivan groaned at the pain, the blood dribbling out of the cut on his right arm.

Ivan counter attacked, kicking the knife out of her hand. They both dived towards the knife, reaching out towards it. Ivan however, got the knife first and immediately fought back. Now she was cornered, Ivan was armed. Natalia backed off, now she stood on the ledge, backing away.

"You don't have to do this." Natalia pleaded, "I

just, wasn't feeling myself." Ivan looked at her, she was shaking. Ivan ominously walked towards her, knife in hand.

"We could've ended this before." Ivan declared, "Now this is the end." He pushed her, off the cliff and into the green lake.

Below he could hear her screeching in pain as the radioactive water burned her skin. The screeches of pain stopped soon after, blood poured out of her mouth. As the sun disappeared over the horizon, Ivan laid, resting on a nearby rock. The blood, a raspberry red, dribbled from the cut. His vision blurred and his arm numbed. Laying back on the smooth rock, his body aching, he slowly fell into a deep slumber after one chaotic day. ■

BLOCK GAME

Elijah Macapolo · Year 7 · *Simonds Catholic College*

First spawning in, I see a gracious world.
Falling snow, waving trees.
I see nature move beautifully.
I hear a light rustle, the ocean breeze.

Gathering materials in the open sun.
Fighting mobs, wielding swords.

Taming some, as my own.
Down I go, to mine some ores.

Building a shelter, for a place to call home.
Getting geared up, to traverse the lands.
Entering the end, nervous and afraid.
Coming back home, something I could withstand. ■

SCAVENGERS

Rhys Vu · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Peyton and Mark walked through the front door of the abandoned house, everyone in the town had fled as soon as bombs started dropping in the nearby city. Peyton's eyes explored the room, rotten and broken wood planks made the walls and floor, cobwebs resting in every crack of the wood boards, bugs strolling through the whole house. *Maybe we should've continued scavenging in that other house, it was better than this one.* He thought to himself. Out of nowhere, a loud bang came from upstairs.

Mark turned and looked at Peyton, he signalled his hand and pointed upstairs. Peyton shook his head, Mark responded with a facepalm and dragged Peyton upstairs with him.

"Um would you look at the time, my mum's calling me home for dinner." Whispered Peyton while quivering. Mark looked back at him with a surprised face and one eyebrow raised.

"Your mum died in the city due to the explosion, all of ours did." Mark peeked his head through the corridor, it was dimly lit since the sunlight barely crept through any cracks in the wall's planks of wood. Mark treaded lightly on the planks, Peyton followed behind with his body shaking and his eyes wide open. Another loud noise came from one of the rooms. Peyton quickly darted his head towards the noise. The house was abandoned, what would the noise be? Peyton started at the door, *maybe we should've scavenged in another house* he thought to himself. Mark quietly walked towards a door in the direction of the sound while Peyton was dying of fear on the inside.

"Are you crazy Mark?!" Peyton whispered. Mark turned his head around but then went back to the door. With his hand sweaty, his gripped the doorknob, twist, push and let go. An aroma spread through the air that reeked. Peyton walked up to look inside and he froze. It was four people crouching over somebody and picking from it and eating parts of it. Peyton and Mark had only seen these kinds of things in movies or games, however this seemed more horrific to them. Bones cracked as the four of the people turned their head towards the two.

"Hello there." One of them said with a low voice. Peyton gulped, his eyes opened wider and his body sweat excessively. The one that spoke got up with more of his legs and arms being revealed, his skin was a sick shade of green and parts of his body had skin that had been ripped off or damaged.

"Names?" He said. Peyton remained frozen while Mark slowly backed away. The man grunted and

walked up to them. His teeth were tombstones, his arms were like branches on a tree during winter and his skin was the colour of ash. He reeked of a rotten smell, something like meat that's gone off.

"You know," he said in a low tone "There's not many newcomers around here." He looked at their bodies before looking up at them.

"No fresh meat." He spoke again. He wasn't grinning, his eyebrows were low and his mouth was straight and his eyes were only half open. The quietness shot chills up Peyton's spine. Floorboards groaned as Peyton backed away slowly, Mark turned and looked back at Peyton with his eyes opened larger than before and his limbs stiff. The man pounced onto Mark.

Mark threw his hands at the man, hitting his ice cold face and feeling the skin that was peeling off. Quick minded, Mark grabbed the torn shirt the man wore and threw him to his side. He leapt off the floor and sprinted down the stairs as the other people in the room ran after him and Peyton. They ran outside into the daylight and ran onto the dirt road, dust flew up into their eyes and dirtied their face.

"We're not gonna lose them Mark, there's nowhere to go!" Peyton exclaimed with a nervousness in his voice. Mark was looking at his hand as his feet ran, in his hands laid a ripped piece of cloth from the mans shirt with the name 'Solomon' stitched onto it.

Solomon, huh? He thought.

"Are you even there Mark?"

"Huh," Mark snapped out of his thoughts "we should hide then, if we gain distance from them." He replied.

"There's no way we can do that!" Peyton replied with a high pitched tone. Mark looked around him, smoke grey coloured wood planks that were chipped everywhere, broken doors that looked hundreds of years old, tall grass that was up to knee height.

"We hide in there." Mark pointed towards another abandoned house. Peyton directed his attention towards it, there virtually no difference in its looks compared to the other houses. *There's no way this is gonna work* Peyton thought. They ran in, feet banging heavy in the floor. Slamming the door, they looked for somewhere to hide before the other people could get inside.

"There," Mark pointed to a hole in the floorboards "we can hide in there." Peyton nodded in

compliance and went in, Mark pushed him down so he could get in quickly. They landed on their backs and hit dirt, Peyton groaned until Mark threw the palm of his left hand over Peyton's mouth. He put one finger to his lip and as he did that, the front door swung open. The two of them shuffled back so that no one could see them through the hole. It was pitch black and all they could hear was groans and other noises being made by the insane people. Peyton began to breathe heavy. Mark looked at him and patted his shoulder, Peyton calmed down slightly.

"Hello again." Said Solomon, in the dark. Peyton screamed and crawled and climbed out of the hole and Mark followed just behind.

The other people came into the kitchen, the room where the hole was. They neared as Solomon climbed out the hole. Little whimpering sounds escaped from Peyton as he was shaking with his mouth and eyes wide open. Mark walked backwards as they got closer and bumped into the kitchen table. He glanced backwards and he saw a knife sitting there with its blade shining. He grabbed it and held it forward, pointing it at Solomon and the others.

"I don't want to have to fight." Mark said while trying to be intimidating. Peyton was backing away and felt a broken window, his hand grabbed onto a broken shard of glass and he pointed it forward too.

"Y-Yeah." His voice trembled. They continued to near Mark and Peyton, Mark looked towards Peyton and immediately ran towards the insane people. He swung and got shallow cuts on them, screams of pain filled the room. Peyton swung too but his hands were flimsy and scared. Solomon landed a punch that directly hit Peyton and all sent him to the floor. Mark was swinging and looked behind to see Solomon on top of Peyton with the broken shard of glass now in his hand and trying to drive it into Peyton. Mark dashed towards him and kicked Solomon hard in his cheek, Peyton getting up and readying his fists. Mark breathed in deeply and muttered something with his eyes closed before shoving his knife deep in Solomon's

skull. Velvet liquid burst out and clinger onto his clothes and the knife blade. Minutes later, Mark and Peyton were done with driving objects into the other's heads. Rich red stains were scattered all over their clothes as they walked outside and back onto the dirt path. Peyton had a blank expression on his face and Mark just looked ahead of him.

"This stupid war has gotten everyone crazy." Said Mark.

"Yeah, I think they put something funny in those bombs." Replied Peyton. Mark laughed a bit and got his expression to happy.

"Too bad we had to kill those people," Peyton said with a relaxed voice "they looked like they wanted to finish off what they were eating before."

Suddenly a sharp sting appeared in Peyton's chest, he heard something dripping onto his shoe. He slowly looked at his chest, a black fire poker from the fireplace inside the house was dripping with his own blood. The poker went out of him and into Mark before he could do anything, after that it went out of him too. They both fell into their knees then collapsed over onto the dirt. Peyton looked down to where his legs were and saw one of the insane people there standing with a fire poker in their hands. He felt himself fading and slowly drifting off to heaven, Mark fought against it while Peyton gave in.

"I think you're gonna need a band-aid for that." Peyton said while smiling before his chest stopped rising and falling and his whole body relaxed and slumped. Mark rolled onto his back while groaning.

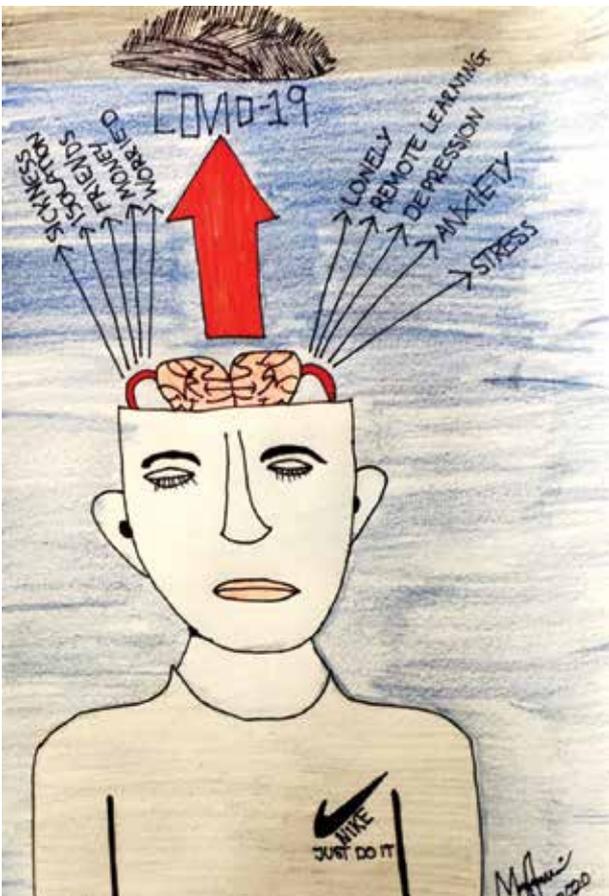
"Yeah, I'll need a few band-aids actually." He said before shutting his eyes and finally giving up. *This stupid war's made us flee our home city only to be killed by some deranged people. Somehow, this kid's got the guts to make one past joke before he died even in the world's situation.* Mark looked up at the sky, the clouds opened up one little gap that revealed ocean blue sky. *Yeah, I'll be up there soon.* He closed his eyes and grew a smile.

Real soon. ■



Matthew Visentin
Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Quarantine



Matthew Azzopardi
Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

COVID-19

THE SEASONS

Simon Tran · Year 7
Simonds Catholic College

Always changing in,
The most weird and different ways
With natural beauty ■

EVENING

Simon Tran · Year 7
Simonds Catholic College

Tired and sleepy
As the day says its goodbyes
And night starts to rise ■



Jaydon Lunt
*Year 10 · Simonds Catholic
College*

Pandemic

MY MOTHER

Marissa Agius · Year 9
Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Her smile is very, very bright
Her nice glistening eyes
She is like a star in the night
An angel in disguise
Her hugs, are truly the best
My love for her, beyond
I am so very strongly blessed
Her hair's elegant blond
She is very much the kindest
She's unlike everyone
She's the world's finest, the finest
She is not just someone
You're like a flower in the weeds
The weeds turn to flowers
Because you spread your kindness seeds
With your superpowers
You're the best, the best mum ever
There is no one like you
Our bond will be for forever ■

THE SEA

Natalie Luglio · Year 9
Catholic Regional College North Keilor

I love the sea and all its flaws,
Its trembling skies and waves.
I love its scary fish with jaws;
How they hunt in darkness.
I love how the sea moves at night,
Carried by endless waves.
I love watching the birds take flight,
Carrying fish away.
I love standing in the ocean,
The waves whisper to me.
I love watching the seas motion,
How vast and deep it is.
I never dreamed the sea so deep,
Deeper, deeper, deeper still.
I never dreamed the sea so steep,
Steeper, steeper, even more.
I love the sea and all its flaws,
Its trembling skies and waves.
I love its scary fish with jaws,
How they hunt in darkness. ■

SUGARCANDY MOUNTAIN

Joya Abdelmalak · Year 8
Catholic Regional College North Keilor

There's no such place as Sugarcandy Mountain,
No sweet by and by.
There's no such place as Sugarcandy Mountain,
Sugarcandy Mountain is a lie, lie, lie!
Sugarcandy Mountain is a lie!
There's no such place as Sugarcandy Mountain,
Animals are slaughtered and then
Converted into pork or mutton pies
Which are guzzled down the throats of men.
There's no such place as Sugarcandy Mountain,
When you die you die.
There's no such place as Sugarcandy Mountain,
Sugarcandy Mountain is a lie. Lie, lie, lie!
Sugarcandy Mountain is a lie! ■

THE CHARISMA OF EARTH

Isabel Hrvatin · Year 10
Catholic Regional College North Keilor

The food we receive from nature's crops,
and the ripples of the ocean's waves,
The relief we receive from the rain's drops,
and the way our Earth saves.

So why surpass,
this treatment that is not fair?
Because greener was the grass,
and cleaner was the air.

Tomorrow the sun will rise,
and the clouds may look imperaled,
and we must remember to care for this great
prize,
That we call our world. ■

THE BOY WHO DIDN'T KNOW IT WAS TOO LATE

Caitlyn Abbriano · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

“God Mum, can you ever get anything right?” as he slammed his fists on the table, pushing the plate into the wall, getting up and shutting the door with a bang, loosening the hinges and feeling the whole house shake.

Even though she appeared as hard as nails, her body dropped, tears streaming down her face and splashing onto the floor. Uttering to herself, “What did I do to deserve this?” Talking to the cupboards surrounding, which she felt caving in.

He never truly realised how broken he made her life. Broken to the point where she dared not to look at him, as her pain was overbearing.

She barely picked herself up, walking to her room with her hands over her head. She ruffled through her dresser, grabbing some clothes, stuffing it into a duffle bag. She knew it was time to leave.

The next morning, he woke up, finding a scrunched ball of paper on the kitchen table. He ferociously grabbed the note, reading “My heart is paralysed with sorrow to say, but I feel there is no other way.

You know I can't hold you forever, but I'll always love you my little boy, Trevor”.

Filled with anger, he screamed with rage, not understanding why his mother decided to leave.

Years had gone by, and the boy had grown up, raising a family of his own. Still to this day he never understood why his mother left. He thought life was great until his family started to react the very same way as he did, finally realising at this moment he had treated his mother the same.

Maybe because she didn't love him or didn't care. It occurred to him that she loved him with the very heart that he broke, but the problem was he didn't even wonder how she felt after he said those nasty things. All the times she would make a mistake. Sadly, he didn't know what he had lost before it was gone.

Love those close to you before they are gone. Respect those who hold you dear. What goes around comes around. ■

WE CAN CHANGE FOR THE BETTER

Samantha Petersen · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Delicate as a flower,
Beware the throws.
As high as a tower,
Beware the fall.

Respect or satisfaction,
You know the answer.
Respect is an action,
Worlds can change.

Respect is to give.
A heart is full.

If something happens just forgive.
It will be alright.

If you're sad just come here,
just don't fear.

It's a new year,
We can change.

We are all apart,
Some sort of community.

We all have a heart,
Let's respect each other. ■

BENEATH THE MASK

Ann Renda · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Quick! I race past the mirror, not allowing my reflection to catch me before I reach the sanctuary of my mask collection. Should I wear steel and block out my weakness, or tinted glass and let people see a little bit of me? I select my favourite fabric mask, detailed on the forehead. It's gorgeous, everyone compliments it. Now I can safely look in the mirror. I look beautiful. I see me, but mask out the pain, the scars, even the passion and love. You can tell a lot about people from their masks. Where they fit into society, their style, the important things. Putting on a mask, you adopt a persona. The persona the world knows you for.

"Hey Luna, gorgeous mask" It's my friends. Riley's wearing a varsity mask. Ally and Martin are wearing the latest fashion. I have never seen what's behind their masks. I'm so curious. Do I truly know them? I will never get to see them though, no one will. Society has taught us we must wear our masks regardless how of how irritating or painful they are. Countless rumours circulate about consequences of removing your mask. Some say you're cancelled, so people never try.

Riley is chatting away and I see Lucy in the distance. She saunters over, hair covering her face. Brushing her hair back, she looks up cautiously. Suddenly all ability to talk has left me. Ally turns pale. "Your mask!" Riley stammers, "Where is it?" Lucy's face is bare, exposed. "I'm sick of the mask! I want you to see the real me." I don't know what to feel. Part of me is outraged. How dare she leave herself so vulnerable in this distorted world. Part of me is intrigued. For the first time I can really see someone.

By the end of the day Lucy's defiance has gone

viral! I'm so confused. Why do I suddenly desire to take my mask off? Why can't I? Who decided that these facades were our way of life? What is going to happen to Lucy? I tear at my mask, panicked. I don't know what to do! Lucy told us that beneath the mask she was hurting, but now she was free. I want that too. I want people to love me, not the idea of me. I want them to see the anxiety. The passion. The love and the hate. What if my friends don't like who is behind the mask?

After fractured sleep, I dawdle to my dresser and choose a mask. It does not sit right and is peeling at the edges. I try to glue it, but it won't stick. I try three more masks, but they won't attach either. I go to school with a mask half on, hoping it will stay for the day. No one notices, but I feel it slipping. It is getting heavier. My face aches, this burden is crushing me. I can't do this. I need to let go. The lunch bell rings, I lift my shaky hand to my face, my heart rattles uncontrollably. I start to feel the wind brush against my face, the sun glistens on my cheeks. My mask drops to the floor. I turn to my friends, I embrace the captivating sensation of a liberated smile, but am petrified. Riley looks at me, "Hi Luna, nice to meet you."

Lucy started a revolution. People aren't afraid to show what is beneath the mask anymore. It is ok to be imperfect. People were taught to wear the mask to hide their real selves. My friends and I learnt that if we respect people for who they are, they won't feel the need to hide. ■

Author note: This in no way is a stance against COVID-19 masks, it is based on dystopian future.

AN EVERLASTING MOMENT

Tamara Vigneto · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

The sharp rocks making themselves comfortable in the souls of my weak shoes as I bounce down the pathway at a brisk pace away from my treacherous school. The chills of the winter season race down the back of my spine, causing both my shoulders to shimmy. Abruptly, my peace is interrupted during my walk by the sound of many heavy footsteps approaching me from behind me. I spiral towards the prominent noise. Heart racing at an uncontrollable speed needing to know what it is. Standing before me a herd of people in light navy-blue shirts, a thick black vest, black suit pants, a rounded dark coloured cap with a few eye-catching chunks of shining gold. Immediately I am on high alert, knowing very well something can turn sour within a blink of an eye. I slowly raise both my hands until they reach the back of my head. One piled on top of the other, fearful of the unknown. I strain my memory, attempting to remember what my mum told me if I was ever in this situation. *Stay calm and comply. Stay calm and comply. Stay calm and comply.*

“DON’T MOVE, GET ON YOUR KNEES!” Their deafening screaming making me jump out of place. Frightened they tighten their grip on the pistol. Hesitant. Weather to fire or not. I drop down to my knees, weak. They surround me, aggressively pushing me to the ground face down, and pressing

me against the frosty and bumpy pavement. Applying their heavy weight to my body. With the energy I have left I gasp for air. I can no longer stay calm. Tears falling rapidly from my eyes.

“Please let me go! I swear I haven’t done anything!” I try lifting myself to my feet, but my strength is no match for these beasts. I continue trying. I just want to go home to my family! I feel a hot pinch on my chest creating an agonizing pain preventing my escape. I see a vibrant red coloured circle consuming my body, unsure what it is. My clothes soaking wet. The top of my eye lids feeling as heavy as weights, slowly closing and everything turning pitch black. I feel the firm hands on my back released. I try to take the opportunity to leave, but my body refuses to move. My heartbeat slows, as do as the breaths I take. But time stops. Just for a second. At least it seems as though it has. I had escaped.

Today, we gather to celebrate the life of Nathaniel Johnson. Murdered in the hands of those recruited to protect. It saddens me that in the world we live in today people continue to show racism, by simply believing people of colour have similar attributes. Be assured Nathaniel was a lovely man and did not deserve what he received. He was simply mistaken for another individual. ■



Taila Gold

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Stolen Connection

The piece of artwork that I created is called ‘The Stolen Connection’. This aboriginal art piece explores the history about the Stolen Generation. The Stolen Connection was created by using a range of traditional Aboriginal colours. Dot painting has been a style of pain application used by the Indigenous Nation thousands of years. The collections of dots connect to create a story. My story was to visual representation the Stolen Generation. The features represent the actions in which the white people stole many children from their families and communities. The hand shows how the white people took with their ‘hands’. The brown pathways connect each person to help ensure their stories will never be lost.



Brooke Condron

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Self

Life is endlessly stressful; it drains you, offers endless battles, too many with tragic endings. Throughout the Melbourne COVID-19 lockdown, my self-portrait was born, it represents my biggest battle of them all; learning to respect myself.



Brooke Condron

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Take Me With You

A place of grief, the figure surrenders themselves to a world of consuming darkness, unable to continue onwards with the bird. It is a depressing fate yet not one without hope, the light will once more return and the bird will watch on from afar. This artwork mirrors my journey in coming to respect my emotions and battle with mental illness while experiencing loss.



Liljana Fedcesen
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Natural

For generations women have been subjected to more than just oppression, but also objectification, sexism and to top it all of unbelievably high expectations. In terms of body image, it's important to not only respect others, but also yourself; bringing up others' self-esteem higher. In a world where the beauty standard is only achievable through cosmetic procedures, natural things such as stretch marks, cellulite, skin colour, body hair etc. are seen as disgusting or unnatural. Respecting everyone means to not bring others down based on body image, we should be able to be ourselves to the fullest extent. Individuality should be celebrated.



Liljana Fedcesen
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Did I Say Yes?

Sexual harassment, objectification and rape is almost treated as 'normal' by part of society, with people more often than not, not consenting to being subjected to such things. I feel it is always necessary to bring light to the issue, as it can fall quiet on ears, with people turning a blind eye in hopes that ignoring the issue means it doesn't exist. Consent is a basic human right to each and every person, and everyone should respect each persons' choice. Consent is required, silence means no, struggling means no, under the influence means no, pressured into agreeing still means no. Respect people and their choice to consent.



Marcus Messner
Year 9 · Xavier College



Callum Tozer
Year 10 · Xavier College



Adam Buhler
Year 10 · Xavier College

DECEPTION

Emma Ortega · Year 7 · CRC Melton

“Breakfast is ready!” I calmly walk down to the table and sitting in front of me is a stack of steaming, hot French Crêpes, with a drizzle of maple syrup, topped off with freshly chopped bananas. I look up to see the news playing on the television. The man speaking is slim and has good posture. “It’s been one year since Jake Roberts was kidnapped...” My mind trails off at the thought of his name. “Be like the chicken who crossed the road,” is the quirky phrase my long-gone brother would say. *I miss him.* I shake my head to get him out of my mind, and I continue eating.

I take a quick glance at the clock, ‘8:15am’. I pick up my bag and say goodbye to my Uncle Dan. “Have a good day Jacky boy!” He says to me. He rubs my dark, red hair as I straighten my tie back up again. We do our weird handshake we made when I was only six years old. He has always been there for me; he is practically like my father. I then greet my dad a farewell, but as usual, he is constantly on a phone call. His mobile phone cries for a break. I try to get his attention, and hope for even the slightest response ‘bye.’ But no. He brushes me off and crankily struts away, switching his phone to his left hand. I step outside, and the city smell instantly fills my nose. I hear cars screeching at other vehicles as drivers honk their horns, and pedestrians are shuffling their feet across the road. Then, it all stops. A sweaty, large hand aggressively covers my mouth. I feel them heavily breathing down my neck, and their hand starts to vigorously shake as I struggle in their arms. Then it goes black.

My eyes flicker as light blinds my eyes. I slowly push my body off of the ground to find myself in a bland room, that is as cold as the inside of a freezer. There are no windows in sight, but just a thick, heavy, metal door preventing me from escaping. I carefully twist my aching body to jump at the fright of a tall, slim, and muscular man with a black mask in front of me. His arms are folded on top of each other, and his beady eyes glare into mine. I clench my fists preparing to punch. “Don’t even bother,” The intimidating man says with ease. My grip loosens as I look up till our eyes meet, attempting to appear more tough. “Why am I here? Who are you?” I question. The man takes two, long steps in my direction. “Uh, that’s confidential.” I look at him with a blank face, but before I can say anything, he whispers, “Don’t stop me.” He chuckles under his breath, “I won’t stop, I will be just like the chicken who crossed the road. I’ll get to the other side.” I pause, and my body freezes. “What did you just say?”

“Ugghh!” The peculiar man groans. He curls his fingers into his hair. “That stupid phrase!”

“Jake?” My eyes fill with hope, but reality strikes causing my heart to shatter, and my insides to twist at the thought of *my own brother* trying to kidnap me. My head hurts, my heart is pounding, sweat runs down my face as fast as a waterfall. I’m expecting him to lash out at me, defend himself, but he just smiles. I stutter the words, “W-why are you just smiling? Y-y-you just-”

He looks into my eyes and says, “I knew you would find out, but I wasn’t expecting it to be so soon.” Then, we hear a door lock. We’re trapped. His smile drops and he runs to the door in a panic. After pushing, pulling, twisting, and nudging, the door won’t budge. Jake’s body sinks to the floor as I approach him. “I’m sorry, the door always does this. You can probably tell this place is pretty old.” He pauses, then says, “To pass the time, and to benefit us both, if you give me information, I’ll give you mine.” I think to myself, *‘I have to find out what is happening.’* So I agree.

What will he ask? Will he want a huge amount of money? My heart beats as rapidly as a cheetah chasing its prey, but I decide to hide it so it’s not obvious. Jake then turns his body to face me, and says with a genuine tone, “How is dad? Does he still do that funny dance?”

That’s what he wanted to ask me? “He’s okay, but he is much busier than before.” I reply puzzled. “Oh and Uncle Dan-”

“Stop.” Jake interrupts. His skin looks as white as snow. Jake stutters, “Uncle D- Uncle D-Dan, is the reason we’re in here.”

No, no, no, no. “What do you mean? Why are you blaming your mistake on him?” I angrily shout as I interrogate Jake. “I can explain-” We both go silent as the door as heavy as a boulder creaks open. My face that was once pale, speedily turns bright red at the sight. I clench my hands together so tight, my fingernails almost pierce my palms. “Calm down, I’ll explain everything” The monster firmly spoke to me. His voice is as deep as the bottom of a wishing well, his clothing is as dark as the the night, and his eyes are as observant and beady as a hawk. “NO!” I yell, fighting back the tears in my eyes, and by judging the look of Jake’s face, he is just as ashamed. “You were like a father to me! You cared for me! Was that all fake?” I gloomily cry as I stare into his eyes. Before I can continue, Uncle Dan grumpily presses two fingers to his head, then sharply points them in my direction. With a mellow sound, he says the words, “I just saved your life.”

I look at Jake, and Jake looks at me. Uncle Dan finally gets the courage to speak, “It’s true. Last year, I found paperwork for a life-threatening experiment that your dad was going to use you guys for. I wanted to wait until both of you were here so I could break the news to you. After I tried to take Jake, your father was on high alert to not lose you for the project. I didn’t want to take the chance of being seen twice, and there was so much buzz about Jake going missing, so I waited. Don’t be mad at your brother, I didn’t give him any details about it all. I forced him to ‘kidnap’ you in my place.”

Jake didn’t know about this either? Jake’s face is just as astonished as mine.

“What makes you think I will trust what you said so easily? You just kidnapped me!” I say with frustration. Uncle Dan recklessly pulls out a leaflet with bright, bold, red letters spelling ‘CONTRACT.’ I take a few moments to flick through the pages.

Uncle Dan honestly says, “Also, by kidnapping you, it would prove that your father doesn’t really love you as much as I do. You were just his test dummies.” It was a harsh way to put it, but I can’t deny it is true. Uncle Dan was always there for me. He made me smile, laugh and actually cared for Jake and me. *I can trust him.*

Years later, Jake and I turn on the TV to find the news playing. “It’s been years since both Jake and Jack Roberts have been missing. Billionaire Mr Roberts, now has a new family, so it seems as if he has moved on...” The man on TV reports. We turn to face our Uncle Dan, who we now can officially call ‘Dad’ and smile. He gives us a hug. I guess Jake’s quirky phrase isn’t so weird. There is always a better side to life, you just have to cross the road to the better side. Us chickens are now on the better side. ■

TIME GOES ON

Ashok Yel · Year 9 · CRC Melton

Looking back now, I wonder how much I took for granted. Going outside and riding my bike after school with the children in our neighbourhood while listening to ‘The Wallows’ and having the wind quickly passing against our skin, blowing our hair around. The bugs that flew into our eyes at the speed of light and the overwhelming smell of lavender from when we rode past Johnson’s field. I remember travelling with my family; skydiving in Canada, bungee jumping in Australia and accompanying my Grandma on her trip to re-visit Sweden. The days when we walked to school with friends and just felt at peace with the world.

At this current moment, I’m at my Gran’s house, Grandma Maeve. I was named after her and rightfully so, we are basically twins. She has a spectacular farmhouse that has a rustic feel, it is full of wood but still modern with all new appliances. The house has an overwhelming smell of cigars and fresh banana bread. The floorboards in this old house always creak and the fire alarm always glitches, it sounds as if someone is rubbing their slightly wet shoes against Lionel floor. The house has a vintage section which is a white glass cabinet covered in hand drawn baby angels, where she holds her most prized possessions that she collected all around the world from 1960 – 1990 including her most favourite teal, porcelain tea set that she purchased in Sweden of 1972, handmade by a seller on the streets. It was one of a kind and that is why it is so special to her. It is a perfect piece.

I’m still in high school but I do it online because of the virus. This house has a large, perfectly transparent, calm watered lake, which is where I usually do my work. When I walk pass the living room, I catch a glance of Grandma Maeve out of the corner of my eye. I go hug her and just breathe in perfume. She always smells like her ‘L’Air du Temp’ perfume that she drowns herself in. “Maeve?” Grandma questions me. “Mmm” I respond, eager to hear what she has to say. “You’ve become the most educated, bright, gorgeous young lady I have ever met.” I turn to the gold spray painted, wood mirror and stare at myself. Green eyes, shoulder length, 2A, Amber brown hair and light olive skin. For most this would be the ideal look, but no one is more insecure than 15 year old high school girls. “Thank you, Gran.”

I walk out by the lake. Something about water, it’s just so soothing for me. All my anxious thoughts drift out of my head when I dip my legs into the negative 58 degrees° c water, I begin to reflect. This quarantine has been good for me, I’ve learnt so much about myself and learnt to appreciate every feature of my mind, although school is stressful

with my thousands of assignments. I have this teacher, Ms Crow. 4’11, short brown hair, she just appears as a rude person, but somehow she always has the best lessons. She has been like a saint during this time. To me, her actual classes are the worst. Every time she walks into the room, I feel myself shrinking and the tables and chairs getting huge. When she yells, I begin to feel sick to my stomach, it’s something about the way she speaks and treats us, it’s horrid. I’m about to join her class, so this should be exciting (not).

I spent a while longer out there, painting and listening to music on my grandfather’s old record player that he designed in Sweden. That’s where they met, my grandparents. After my Grandfather died, my Grandma and I went to re-visit. I choose to play the songs he used to have a ball playing and singing for my siblings and I. ‘The Night We Met’, begins to play and I am covered with a warm blanket of memories from when Grandfather Joe was alive. Those days were simple but packed with major fun. As I was going inside, I realised how long I’ve been out here. The sky is navy and the moon is starting to show. It’s a full moon tonight and it is extremely cold, especially since I’m by the water so I’ve got to run up the yard into the house. I stop by my Grandma again, she already has tea ready for me. We begin to discuss various topics, mostly about myself and my life right now. She begins to cough but it couldn’t be anything serious. She’s now coughing blood.

It’s been over a week since Gran’s death and I still remember the way she died. I continue to have nightmares about it, reminiscing the series of events that lead up to it, every, single detail. I always think to myself that I should have done something more, I should have not let her die. ‘We are too far out in the country to get help, I’ll have to run to the neighbours’, “don’t worry darling, stay with me. My death is inevitable. It is better I spend my last moments with you.” I did. I let her breathe her last breath with me and I feel so guilty about it. I was selfish, I should’ve called my parents, aunts and uncles, my siblings and cousins to come spend her last time with them too.

3 months ago I lost my Grandma Maeve to coronavirus. I still replay all the memories to myself, I asked her to let me go get her help and she refused. In the early stages, I was very depressed and felt guilty whenever I saw my relatives. The days got longer, and I was heartbroken. Ultimately the death helped me grow as an individual and learn to live for myself. I can say my morals have changed for the better. ■

CHANGING FACE AS A CHINESE AUSTRALIAN

Kiana Jackson · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

On January 1st, 1901, Australia became a federation. The British Parliament passed legislation and enabled the six Australian colonies to govern in their own right as the Commonwealth of Australia. Since 1788, 160,000 British convicts were brought to a newly discovered land where they settled and took over. In the 1850s, Chinese immigrants rushed over and they reaped the goldfields. European settlers weren't happy, and they shunned the Chinese, accusing them of taking over their land. Premier of NSW Henry Parks described them as 'a powerful race capable of taking a great hold of the country.' In 1900, policies written by Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, proposed laws and policies that would keep Australia 'white and British'. With profound impact on the newly federated Commonwealth, the anti-Chinese White Australian Policy was born.

The policy was a tool of racial exclusion, and even before it was in place, there were countless stringent measures to slow down the rate of the Chinese arriving in Victoria. In the 1880 goldfields, the tents of Chinese miners were burnt down, gold was stolen, and belongings were destroyed. The tag line, 'White Australia' was used for theatre productions, pins and soaps until the policy was over. Even an 'Australia for the White Man' board game was sold, where the object of the game was to get the coloured men out and keep the white men in.

For the Chinese who left their villages in hope for a new life in Australia, the ship conditions were beyond terrible. Many people died of typhoid and cholera and the rest were weakened by scurvy, dysentery and fever.

"Yin Mei never forgot the night when dear sister Wei was struck ill and as the nurse rushed into the cabin, it was already too late. It was a dreadful time for the Chen family. They battled the severe sea sickness that came in bouts and all she wanted

was to be back home. After many long months, the ship came to a halt and the family piled out onto the gangplank, and they looked around in awe, taking in the smells, sights and sounds.

Once they arrived, Families were instructed to do a dictation test that was used to keep non-Europeans out of Australia.

"G'day," said an officer. The family blinked twice, not understanding what this man was saying. "Righty-o," he began, "This is a dictation test. Each of yah speaks fifty words in any European language. Can be any language, just make sure it's European. English, French, Italian, Polish, start."

If an immigrant couldn't pass the dictation test, they were to be deported by the Australian Government. Even if you passed the test, the immigration officer had the right to test you again in another European language. The White Australian Policy killed so many people's hopes and dreams of living in a new land where conditions and opportunities would be better than their own back home. The policy ended in 1958 when the government was driven by the "populate or perish" doctrine. It wasn't until the Racial Discrimination Act in 1975 made it illegal to discriminate against migrants based on their race, and this removed the last traces of the White Australia policy. As of 2018, Australia's migration program allows people from any country to come to our beautiful country, regardless of their nationality, ethnicity, culture, religion or language. People from all around the world now settle in Australia, creating the diverse society today that is very different to how life was 120 years ago. In a place where me and you call home, an overwhelming majority can now all agree that multiculturalism is here to stay. *"In a land of golden soil a wealth for toil land bound in nature's gift, in history's page, let every stage, Advance Australian Fair."* ■

ISOLATION

Chloe Paxton · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Blue leaves fall in the winter,
A pale reminder of all that was lost.
From the window we watched as the
world changed,
The hinges of the cottage rusted.
We forever remained indoors.

Through the cracks in the wall flora crept in,
Bringing with it our death.
Birds came to heal our decaying lungs,
And burn our dead.
Until the humans were no more.

Our empires crumbled around us,
To ash and rubble they returned.
Our history will never be recovered.
Once mighty Gods walked these lands,
But now all that is left is the blue leaves
gone brown. ■



Alannah Leech
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Mikaila Lacey
Year 9 · Aquinas College

Nature's Circles

NAMELESS WOMAN

Danae Lazarus · Year 10 · Aquinas College

Her back was aching but she did not know why. She stood for hours on end, but her work never paid off. It was like millions of people had been trampling up and down her spine all day. Her feet hurt too, as if they were infected with a bone eating disease. She could not give up hope. Her lungs were so thick with smoke, that if you cut her in half you could draw pictures with it.

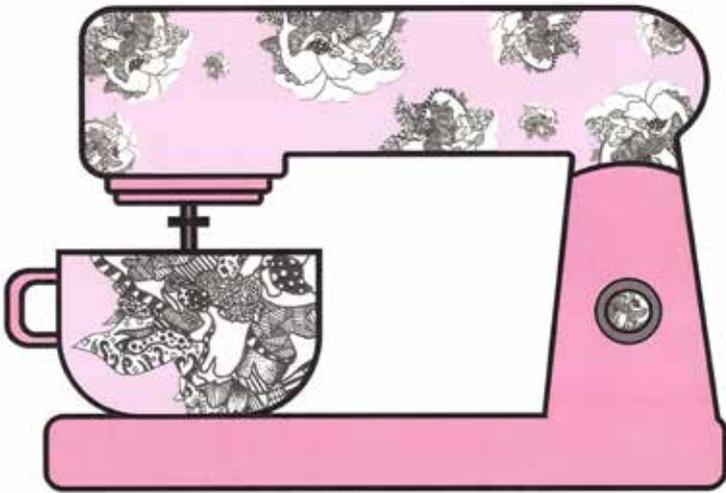
People witnessed her pain every day, but no one ever thought to ask if she was okay. Her eyes were bloodshot red from the dust and other particles. Her hair was cut, shaved and trimmed without her consent. Somehow she was still alive. Her skin was crawling with itchy bugs that she could not exterminate. Instead, she fought the urge to scratch. She was a ruined work of art. She wanted to fit people into her world like a piece of the puzzle. Her mistake was inviting a parasite to live with her.

Essentially, that was the decision that killed her. No-one knew the name of the woman whose back was aching, but I did. Her name was Earth. ■



Elizabeth Murphy
Year 12 · Aquinas College

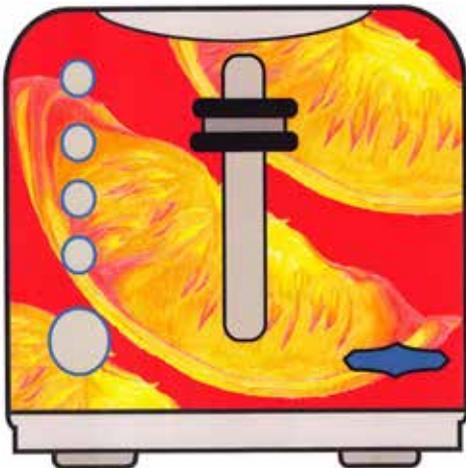
Serenity



Abigail Ventura
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Elise Keeghan, Maia Weston, Jeremy Clark
Year 9 · Aquinas College



James Barber
Year 9 · Aquinas College

FIRSTS

Evan McVey · Year 7 · De La Salle College

My dad and I were playing FIFA on our brand-new PlayStation. It was the third time that we had played together that day but I was yet to win a match. I was getting a little bit frustrated because he teased me every time that he had control of the ball.

When he scored his first goal of the game, I lost my patience and yelled at him for teasing me. This just made him laugh.

I started with the ball, more determined than ever to score a goal. I nearly started crying when my shot hit the crossbar, into the goalie's hands. Dad then went on to score two quick goals in a row.

At the half time break, I asked dad if we could restart the game but he said 'nope'. I started with the ball thinking that I may as well try to score some spectacular goals because I wasn't going to win. It was that shot at goal that scored and got the score to 3-1. Dad congratulated me on getting a goal even though I could tell that he only wanted to win. He was on the attack so I just charged at his player and miraculously managed to get the ball without giving away a foul. Once I noticed that I had the ball, I sprinted towards the goal and scored again! The score was back to a one-point difference.

Dad started to feel uncomfortable then because he knew that he would actually have to concentrate for the rest of the match. As soon as he took off with the ball at the restart, I stole it from him and charged towards the goal before passing to a teammate who scored yet again!

The scores were level with about two minutes to go. I could tell that dad was desperate to score and

win so I went into full defence mode. He took a shot which my goalie saved. I instantly passed the ball to one of the attackers who took off towards the goal and let fly with a shot that deflected off the goalie into the goal.

Once I realised that I had won, I went nuts because I was so happy!

My son and I were playing a soccer game called FIFA for the third time in an hour. I had won both the previous games so I was confident that I would win. Evan, my son, surprised me when he said that he wanted to play again. I got off to a flyer of a start getting a goal on rebound, before getting two quick goals just before the half time break. My son asked me if we could start the game again.

This made me laugh. I responded by saying, you shouldn't have wanted to play another game because I knew that I would beat you again. He started having shots from places that seemed impossible to score from. He scored the first shot that he attempted but I remained calm as I was still winning by two goals. I congratulated him on scoring a goal before going to score another goal, or so I thought. He snatched the ball from me, giving away what should have been a foul, and went on to score another goal. For the first time while playing, I started to get a little bit nervous because I had to start to take the game seriously. Just before the end of the game he scored another two goals to win the match 4-3.

He was so pumped that all I could do was be happy for him. ■

ABANDONED AT BIRTH

Fred Howard · Year 7 · De La Salle College

I work in the construction business, the lowest paid job in this city, even though it's close to the most dangerous. I have nothing in my life apart from this job and my dirty tiny home. My wife had gotten cancer and passed away while pregnant. The baby had died as well because it was so premature. She was the only person who cared for me when I wasn't at work. When I was walking back from work everyone was trying to keep their distance from me because I had dirt all over me. As soon as I arrived home, she was ready to greet me with a hug.

Now that she's gone, the only greeting when I walk in are the taxes in the mailbox. I walk in and go to sleep on the couch.

I work 12 hours a day, lifting heavy bits of steel and sitting down, watching birds fly over Central Park. This the one thing that takes away all my thoughts of the bad things that have happened in my life.

One day just out of nowhere this guy who looked around 30 walked onto our construction site and started to talk to my manager. They talked for a few minutes before my manager pointed in my direction. He was walking towards my office and entered the door.

"Are you Steve Jones?" he asked in a light and quiet voice.

I froze, unsure of who he was, and how he knew my name. At first, I thought someone from here had set it up.

"Yes," I replied in a confused voice.

He did an air fist pump, and then dropped to his knees and started to cry. How was I supposed to know why? He knelt down on the ground and tried to talk, but it was hard to make out through the sobs.

"I...found...after...for...father" was all I could make out. You, found, after, for, father; he was

searching for his father, I thought, but why was he so happy to find me? Did I know something about his father?

At the end of the day I said that I would take him home. I asked him questions about his father.

He said, "He left me at birth, and thought that I was dead. My mum died while she was pregnant with me and my dad's name is Steve Jones."

I got up from my seat and grabbed his collar.

"Who told you that, how do you know all this about me?" I said in an agitated voice.

"Because," he said, "I'm your son."

I couldn't believe it he was my son! The one I had abandoned at birth because I thought he was dead. He had spent 20 whole years trying to find me and he finally had. I had tried to prove him wrong by doing DNA tests but every single one said that he was my son.

He told me everything; that one of the nurses was taking him home, because no one else knew what to do with him and they couldn't leave what they thought to be a dead baby at a hospital overnight.

The next morning just as she was about to pick him up and put him in the car he began to cough, and then slightly moved his arms, she almost fainted because she thought he was possessed. She kept him at home and took care of him to this day, and now it is my responsibility to.

Ten years later

There I was, lying in the hospital bed as my heart rate slowly decreasing, my life was coming to an end but my legacy, the wealthiest construction business in the world, would continue through my son.

All my hard work was about to pay off. A gift to my son who would now become one of the wealthiest people in the world. I am sorry for making you miss out on half of your life, but hopefully I can repay you with this. And to the nurse who took care of my son, I am forever grateful, and hopefully you will see him again one day and see what your kindness has brought into his life. ■

RESPECT

Jamie Pierides · Year 7 · De La Salle College

“I can read minds and move objects just by looking at something. Look! I tipped my cup of milk using my super powers. And I know what you are thinking, Mum. You’re thinking about cooking my favourite meal of chicken and potatoes tonight for dinner. I feel so special and invincible to have such amazing powers. I am no longer boring old Jamie, that is hopeless at everything. I’m on top of the world! Super Jamie to the rescue! Have no fear, Jamie is here!”

“Jamie, you spilt the cup of milk as your sleeve brushed across it whilst saying “Abracadabra!” And no, I wasn’t thinking about what to make for dinner. I was thinking about how to punish you if you don’t clean up that milk straight away! How about no TV for you tonight! You are my super special boy as you are so funny, caring and loving. Don’t mistake your photographic memory for super powers. Now, put your great number and spelling skills for good use and do some homework.” ■

RESPECT

Josh O’Leary · Year 10 · De La Salle College

Respect to me is a sign of appreciation to another, aside from their flaws and what they have previously done. Among my friends, things are said and done that can upset one another but the part that we sometimes may forget during these moments, is that deep down we still have great respect for each other.

There is maybe some stereotyping within groups of friends which just captures the sense of how we joke around with each other and actually underlie the strong bonds between everyone. This is because you must know a person to joke about their personality. However, I do think that there are always areas that cross this boundary, and I should not have to even mention what these boundaries are but just expect people to avoid them. It’s unfortunate that there are some people who cross these boundaries, because in my perspective it shows a lack of respect to the person you’re interacting with. This is most evident when the person has boundaries around information that they are comfortable with sharing and yet also have other issues that they don’t want to be discussed. Gaining someone’s trust involves respecting a person’s privacy and their choices around these matters.

It annoys me when people disrespect others, then defend themselves by responding with some form of a wise crack as cover up or making some ridiculous excuse that they were ‘just joking’ without acknowledging that they instigated the attack. Furthermore, if the targeted person retaliates and lashes out in defense to feeling disrespected, some may even go as far as to make out that they were actually the victim. This is total denial, when it is them who have been disrespectful. These types of behaviors are unacceptable and undertaken by weak-minded individuals. However, my point is you cannot become the victim when you started the fight. Some will argue that it depends what level of intensity these two arguments reached to determine who is the victim, but there is a simple solution in which we don’t upset each other in the first place.

Not crossing these lines with each other and essentially giving your friends the occasional indication that you’re there for them is very important, and that to me is where I can see respect in others. Respect doesn’t mean you have to be friends with this person, but you have enough of a liking to them where you wouldn’t disrespect them. ■

GREEN

Lorenzo Imbriano · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I don't think I have ever seen
A colour as lovely as green.

I hear the wind rustling in the trees
I hear the hum of the bees.

I smell the grass of this healthy earth
As I sit beside the smouldering hearth.

My hand feels smooth on the evergreen trees
So smooth it makes me buckle my knees.

I taste freshness of the minty leaf
From this blossoming planet to my relief.

I envy those who can play as they please
Yet I am trapped behind lock and key. ■

WHEN WILL IT END?!

Mia Bennett · Year 6
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

COVID has locked us up
As if we are birds trapped in cages
Hidden from the outside world
Longing to leave
When will it end?!

Slowly computers become classrooms
Kitchens transform into offices
Social connection becomes internet connection
Headlines change and depress
When will it end?!

We watch from inside our homes
As the situation worsens
Happy smiles disappear
Hidden behind masks
When will it end?! ■

IT'S LIKE A MOVIE

Mia Wood · Year 6
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Worldwide pandemic,
It's like a movie.

Home schooling for three terms,
It's like a movie.

Forced to wear masks,
It's like a movie.

Can't see friends,
It's like a movie.

Empty streets,
It's like a movie.

Borders are closed,
It's like a movie.

No summer fun,
It's like a movie.

Trapped inside,
It's like a movie...

A horror movie! ■

HEAL

Olivia Verdini · Year 5
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

The way we lived is about to change...
To restore the pain
We have to gain
An open mind
As this is a sign
That we cannot deny
To work together
To make a difference
To find a way
To heal the pain ■

FEAR

Olivia Read · Year 5
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Everything was getting better
As the bushfires died down
To our greatest horror this virus rose
One case lead to another
Lockdown began
The world closed up
The grocery shops were empty
The death toll rose
The cases jumped
And fear could be seen in the air ■

EMERALD SPLASH

Evangeline Kim · Year 6
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

On the battlefield full of darkness,
Chaos surrounds.
I have physically been defeated,
Yet mentally, I am strong.
I have hope in my heart, my soul.
As I take short breaths,
I realise that these are my last moments.
My enemies are too powerful.
But I still discover the truth,
I send a message.
My final emerald splash. ■

TODAY AND TOMORROW

Sumire Tammaro · Year 5
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Live every moment of today,
Things are not always perfect,
But do your part in every way.
Put a smile on your face,
And fill yourself with joy and grace,
And good things will come. ■

CORONAVIRUS IN VICTORIA

Eamonn Mee Kost · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

It all started with a hot summer's day,
Little did we know we'd end up locked away.

We were in the blazing sun when we flicked on
the news,
People were stuck in other countries and even on
a cruise.

Everyone made jokes and laughed about it all,
Then came Stage 2 and businesses began to fall.

People lost their mind and even fought over toilet
paper,

While others said it wasn't real and that ScoMo
was a faker.

Stage 3 came around and it got really bad,
The death toll was rising leaving families
devastated and sad.

Then came Stage 4 with masses of cases in 24
hours,
But kids don't get sick, it's like having
superpowers.

It is getting better and it is on the mend,
But why won't it ever just end? ■

13,150,000 (OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT) SECONDS OF BOREDOM

Lachlan Webb · Year 5 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Consuming snacks is a great way to pass time,
it really captures the essence of boredom, you
know?

Another good way to pass time is to sleep, it's free
and easy, and all you need is a pillow really!

Unless you wanna go hardcore mode and go
without a pillow... mad respect to all you
hardcore sleepers out there.

Binging TV is another great way to pass the time,
definitely one of the best.

This year I have watched about 820 episodes,

which translates to about 290 hours of TV.
That's a lot of TV.

When you think about it, we finally have the
free time to do everything that we have been
procrastinating about.

But the thing is... the reason we were
procrastinating in the first place is because we
didn't want to actually do it.

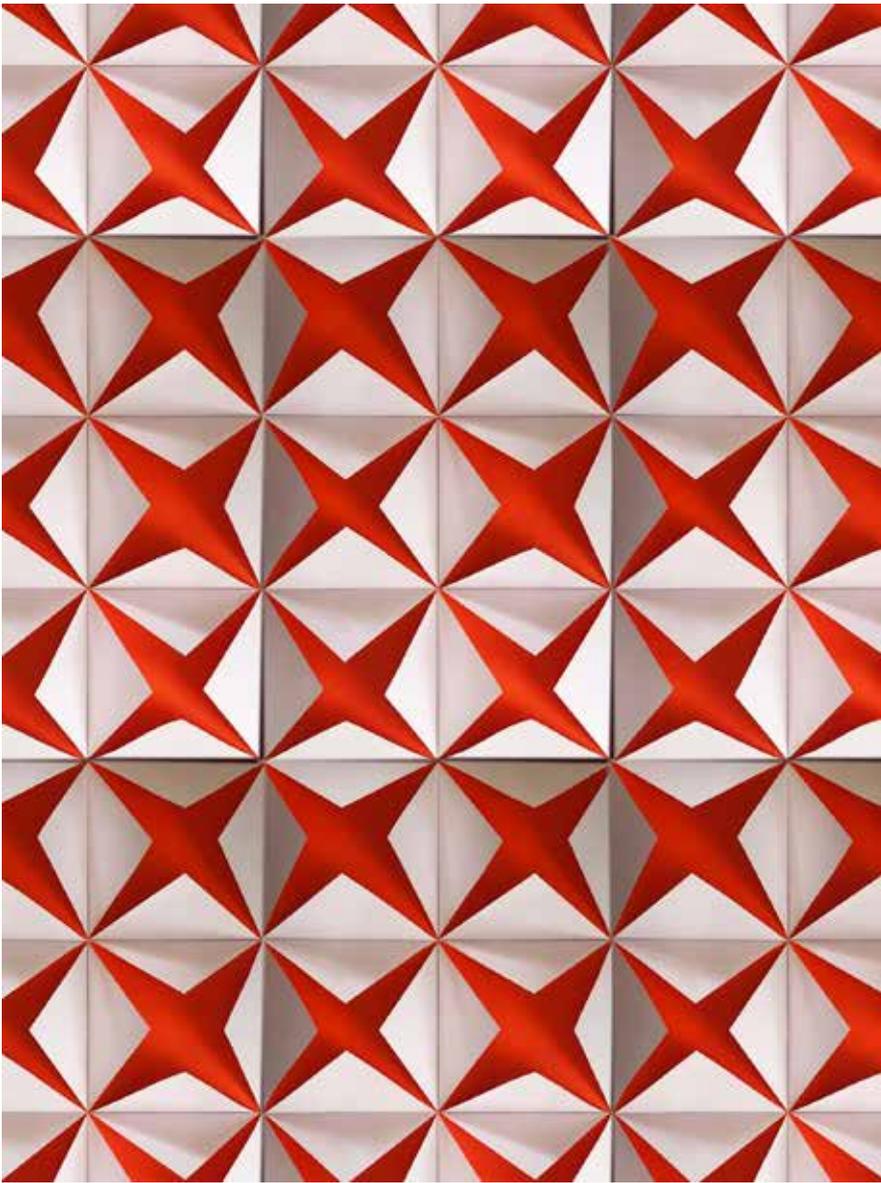
Thus creating an eternal paradox and one which
we cannot escape, hey!?!? ■



Arthur Griffin
Year 9 · Xavier College



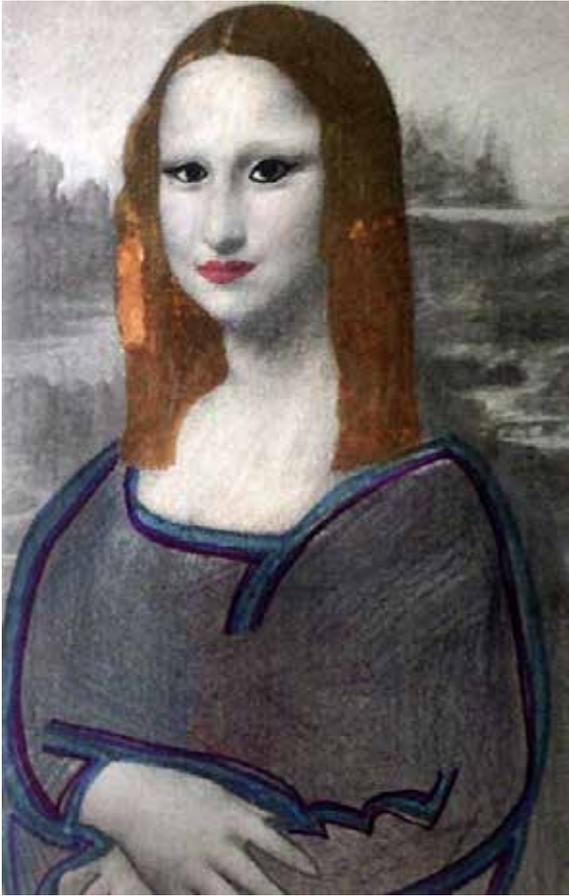
Marc Pym
Year 10 · Xavier College



Luca Sklaentis
Year 9 · Xavier College



Charlie Strode
Year 9 · Xavier College



Aliyah Voysey
Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

My Mona Lisa



Grace Deledio
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

Reflection

Throughout this semester, I have been exploring the theme of conflict, mainly looking at inner conflict. Looking deeper into how an individual feels about themselves and what they think inner conflict means, I examined the artist Bill Henson and the way he uses lighting. I have tried to incorporate his idea and the way he uses dark compositions to communicate his point.



Charlotte Cumming
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

Split

Whilst exploring the chosen theme of ‘unorthodox’, specifically relating to familial relationships, I developed the concept of conspicuous. Within this concept, I decided to take a typically unorthodox situation, divorce, and exaggerate the unorthodox nature of it by representing the idea of a child having to experience their parent’s divorcing and the effects it has on the child. Overall causing the child to split, in some ways forming two lives and two families, which I chose to display, literally, by having the subject appear as though they are being torn in two. I took significant inspiration from Izumi Miyazaki’s photography and the way she incorporates surrealism into an appealing aesthetic.

RESPECTABLY FASHIONABLE

Charlotte McCormack · Year 11 · Star of the School College

Good morning. I am an intern at the Australian Circular Textile Association, a company that specialises in creating a better future for fashion. I finished school two years ago and am currently studying Design and Environmental Science. Like most of you, I love fashion and the freedom it gives me to express myself in my own unique way. I have, however, recently discovered some pretty scary stuff hidden behind the fashion industry, especially regarding the damage it's causing our world. With the rise of global warming, the constantly changing trends and the availability of so many sustainable substitutes for usually damaging materials, there is no reason why you can't be the start of a greener and greater generation for fashion.

Every day we choose something to wear, whether it be a uniform, work attire or just clothes for casual living. These coverings that we put on our bodies are what people first see and can represent so much of who we are. It, therefore, comes as no surprise that the fashion industry generates over \$1.5 trillion annually. People are spending obscene amounts of money on new and exciting pieces of clothing. But with new clothes comes the disposal of 'old' clothes, and by 'old' clothes, I mean t-shirts, shoes and pants that have been worn once before people decide that they're not 'trendy' enough to wear again. It is these items that make up over 500,000 tonnes of landfill annually in Australia alone. This can roughly be compared to over a third of the size of the MCG filled with clothes, which is pretty insane when you think about it. Even for a generation that seems so invested in the preservation of our world, attending climate strikes and signing petitions for change, we still seem to place so much importance on an industry that depends on our own materialistic values that, inevitably, make our climate situation worse.

In recent years, this has been even more prevalent, with more and more people opting for the vintage look; and it couldn't come at a better time! Influencers, models and everyday people are showing off their timeless outfits, digging up their parents' old pants and their grandparents' old knits, giving them a second chance at life as they are taken out of their moth ridden cupboards. Not only that, but people are deciding to venture out to shops like Salvos and Savers, spending afternoons with friends rummaging through racks of unloved clothes and coming home with some absolute gems. Why wouldn't you want to find unique items that, for one, are probably going to be cheaper than if you were to buy them at a retail price, but are also going to stop the overflow of clothing in landfill? Obviously, some of us may be more suited to the

current fashion trends rather than pre-existing ones, which is more than understandable, but even then there are ways to ensure that clothes aren't wasting away after being worn just once. Social media is one of the biggest tools we have as a younger generation, with Instagram and Facebook rental pages being created left, right and centre. These pages allow people to exchange their clothes that may only be appropriate for certain occasions, letting other people make use out of them while the renter gets a little bit of cash on the side.

Take my Year 12 formal, for example. I, of course, wanted to be *dressed to the nines* for this special occasion but knew that I didn't want to spend hundreds of dollars on a dress that I would only wear once. By renting, I was able to wear a gorgeous gown for the night without putting it to waste as I gave it back to the renter once the night was over, giving someone else the opportunity to feel as fabulous as I did in it. With so many different ways for clothes to be reused and recycled, there's no reason that we can't all have fantastic wardrobes while keeping fashion well away from the rubbish bins.

One of the main concerns that follows sustainable fashion is the effect it may have on designers and the businesses that revolve around new and exciting items for their brands. There is the worry that with the rising popularity of recycled clothing and the decreasing need for fast fashion comes job losses. While this may seem like a major problem, there are so many sustainable materials and alternatives that are proven to be just as effective as those that already exist. In 2018, an initiative to ban plastic bags in shopping centres was introduced. Only a few months after this plan was released and put into action, Australia saw an 80% drop in the everyday use of plastic bags. Now, why can't this be the case for fashion? Hundreds of brands across the globe have been creating new and exciting ways to create clothes with environmentally friendly products. Batoko, an independent swimwear company, has turned rubbish into profit, using recycled plastic bottles and compostable materials to create their beachwear, while pineapple leaves have been used to create Piantex, a fully sustainable, artificial leather. Even *high end* brands are working to create a more sustainable future, with brands such as Adidas and Stella McCartney collaborating to make a hoodie out of fully regenerated cotton. There is no doubt that things aren't going to be able to change over-night, but with so many new innovations becoming a reality so soon, there is no reason why brands and businesses can continue to produce fresh designs without damaging the environment in the process.

Our earth is precious with limited resources, and it is our job to ensure that it will still be around for generations to come. With the effects that the fashion industry is having on the world, there is no reason for us to ignore the chance for us to be smarter about our choices, choosing to recycle and be more sustainable with the materials we choose to wear on our bodies. As Madonna put it, 'we are living in a material world, and [we] are [all] material girls', so it is still our responsibility and our job to keep our natural world in the best possible condition, while of course continuing to look as fabulous as possible. ■

SMILEY

Isabelle Diez · Year 9 · Star of the School College



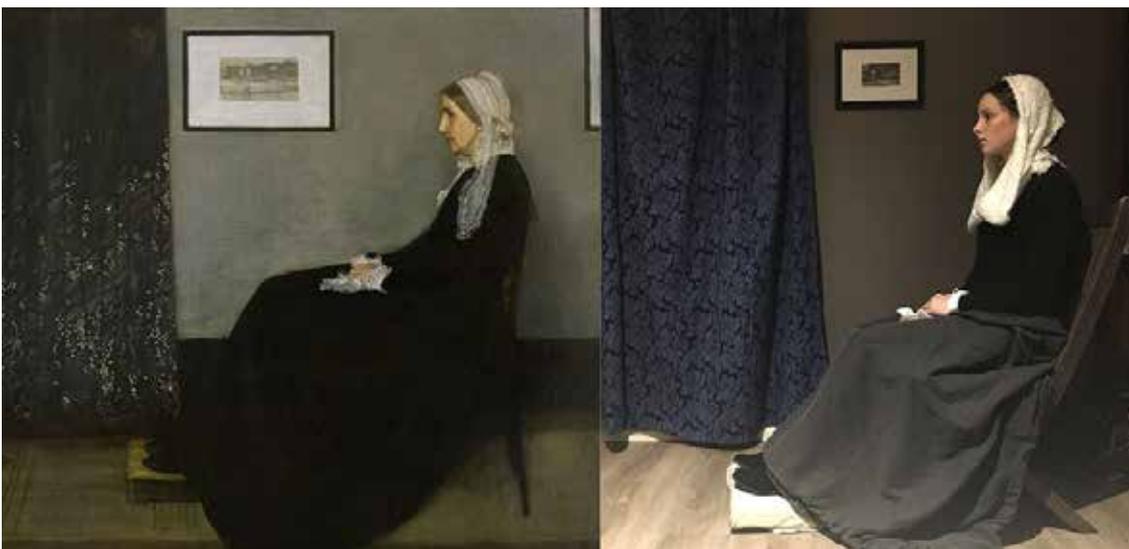
There she was. Smiling her biggest smile, that I hadn't seen in a long time. She finally looked confident wearing her favourite jacket that her mother gave her but we haven't seen that since 'before'. Her long chocolate hair hanging loosely around her soft round face like a frame protecting a precious artwork. It was as if she had forgotten everything that had happened as she maintained

a joyful aura, like she was trying to spread positivity for all who wanted it. Seeing her stand on two feet with a composed stance, her smile warmed me, even on this cold day. Everything about her was gentle, the way her nose scrunched when she laughed to the way she flicked her hair off her broad shoulders. She just looked happy. ■

SECRETS HELD

Josephine Mozina · Year 9 · Star of the School College

The sun was sinking out of the clouds and dripping like honey into the sky. My tangled and mousy brown hair was getting in my face and it was my turn to do the dishes. I stared into the dull murky water, the desert yellow rust on the sink seemed as if it were growing. I harshly scrubbed away at the dishes, feeling the cold water on my skin. My thoughts wandered to all the dirt that was caught up in my life. I knew how lucky I was but a sense of emptiness filled me. My flawless act at school was simply a facade of how unsuccessful I felt at home. Tears started to fall from my dark, muddy eyes and gently splashed into the sink. The sound of rain on the roof stopped my thoughts and I remembered the feeling I always had after the rain. A secret that could not be held in anymore. ■



Sophie Knights
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

Self as Art



Laura Palumbo
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

Self as Art

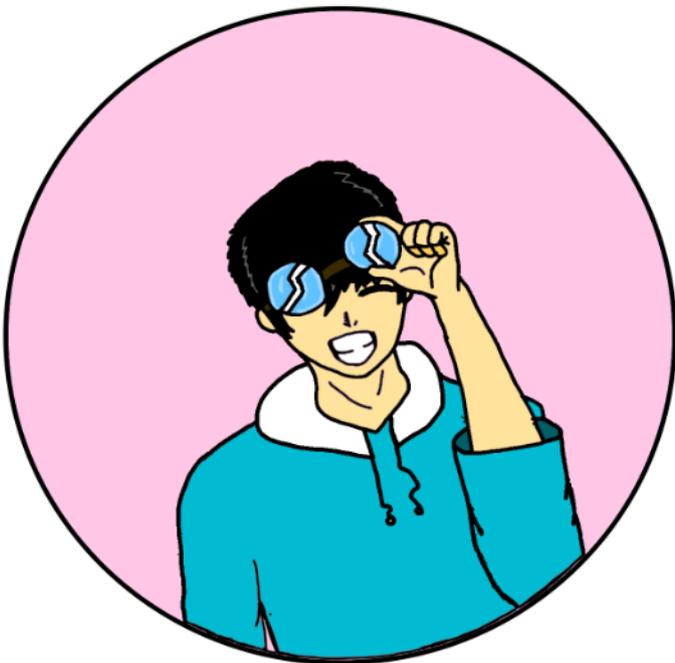


Madeline Kirsopp
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

Self as Art



Deaken Perera
Year 9 · St. Peter's College



Lance DeVera
Year 9 · St. Peter's College

RESPECT ME, I CAN TEACH YOU A LOT: STORY OF A TREE

Abel Jose · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

I was seeded hundreds of years ago, with the kindness of someone it could be a bird, a human, flowing stream which kindly pushed me to its bank. My growth was a tough journey. I struggled to stay grounded many times. I felt confident when my roots were growing strong and nurturing me. I sprung out wide, branches giving shelter to many. I got worried when the leaves were falling in the Autumn but that was not the end. Fallen leaves were also part of my growth. Respect me, I was giving out oxygen and remember you cannot survive without this. Then why did you do this to us?

Respect me, I can teach you a lot. I am also part of the nature. I have the right to survive, you have caused many scars on my body for your luxury. Your kids played with me and I have protected you from the sun. Human, you are not the only owner of this world, animals and trees also share this with you. Once I was part of a big family, named forest. You killed my friends for your houses, work, schools and many more reasons. You even burned me and left me as a bare, burned piece of wood and that was painful. But I taught you a story of survival by my regrowth.

I still remember that day, the day they tried to end me. I was trembling with fear along with the birdies nested on me. Your cruelty... I lost my trust and my respect for humans. I then realised that my friends were missing and the forest, my home, looked different. Then I saw some people on a bulldozer, I was devastated to find this out because all the kindness and care that we give humans is not respected. My mother nature is not respected. The bulldozer came near the stream and it was coming closer and it had just destroyed the tree next to me, I was preparing to leave. Suddenly a huge wind and pouring rain arrived, the forest was flooded. They spared me and ran with their lives.

Buddha once said “the forest is a peculiar organism of unlimited kindness that makes no demand for its sustenance and offering shade even to the axe-man who destroys it”. Respect me I can teach you courage, strength, kindness, and resilience. The birds need me, the soil need me, the wind wants my hug, the earth want my leaves as blanket. This universe belongs to all of us. Respect me. ■

A WARM TOUCH

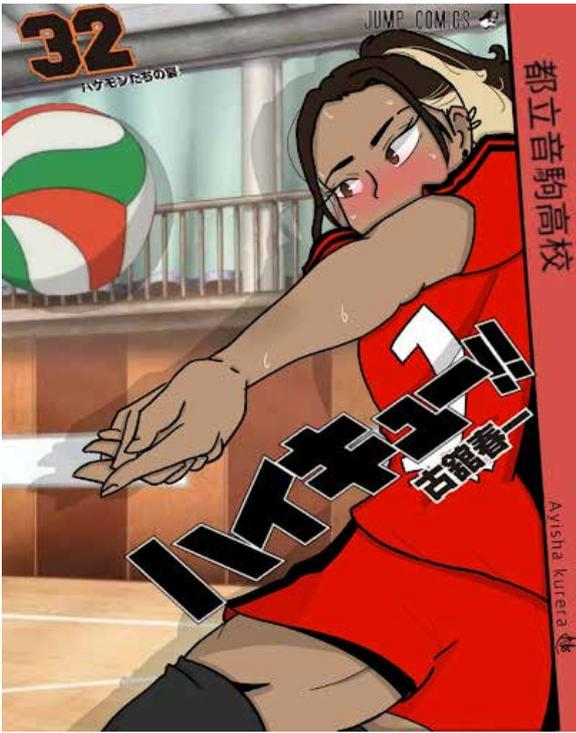
Alex Rickard · Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Change rolled around the cup.
Yet the shoes stayed still.
The short sack of skin and bones clutched the handle
in his thin jacket's pocket.
He wondered whether it would end with just a kick.
The roll of cash was tucked against his thigh.
Within his special hiding pouch.
Perhaps, they wouldn't find it.
The expected pain didn't come.
Instead, a warm touch on his cheek.
Some kind words.
Warm water.
Comfort.
The boy felt human again. ■

RACISM

Anton Katticaran · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

Roses are red, violets are blue,
The colours are different, but we are the same.
You've gone through shame, but you shall not blame.
Cultures are different, but we should treat them the same.
God is with you, be not afraid he will guide you,
And teach you to treat them equally, so that quickly
We can become graspable to other communities, you
must always see and think
in others perspective to be and link with others feelings. ■



Ayisha Kurera
Year 8 · St. Peter's College



Rachel Jackson
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Samuel O'Brien
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda



Rex Chard
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

LIFE IN THE TIME OF THE VIRUS

Harper Colvey · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

I used to ride my bike a lot
Getting sick air with some friends
While the rest of the population
Got around in their Mercedes Benz

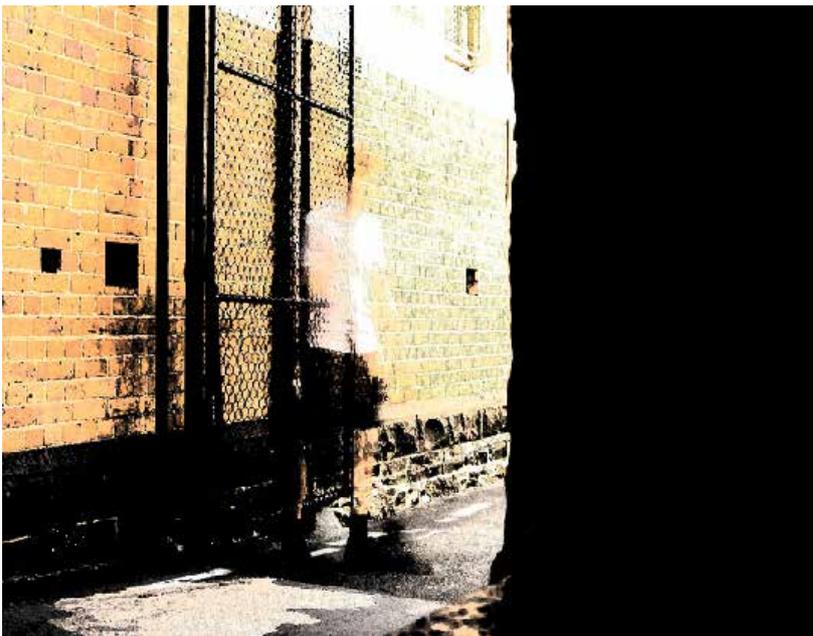
They pretended to have a great lifestyle
Filled with fitness and health foods galore
But when asked about their screen time average
They would lie and say no more

On the occasional nature walk
They saw kids who were offending
As these kids were living the life
That they were pretending

The lockdown lifestyle has put them away
Aimed as a therapy for healing
The virus had come almost comically
To banish the anger, they were feeling

They would come out of their houses
With a desire to go for a run
And go back to that nature walk
And smile at kids having fun

And everyone was saying 'We needed that!'
From infants to grandparents alike
But all I really wanted to do
Was ride my darn bike ■



Aidan Williams
Year 11 · CBC St Kilda

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM

Hugh Craig · Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

It was always going to end like this.
Bodies of friends
Discarded like rag dolls littering the rugged
shoreline.
The seemingly infinite smoky haze
Like a restless forest fire,
Obscuring my view of friends not yet found.
Monstrous gun fire crackles
Obliterating the silence of the cold night air,
Keeping me awake, away from the immoral
confines of my head.
The metallic tang of blood restricted to the
limited space stewing in my mouth,
Reminds me I am not yet dead.

But what for?
Is the price of freedom really worth the price
Young soldiers pay?
My one good leg carries me through
The never-ending night.
But to what end?
Shall I ever get the chance to propose
I will take like a wolf finishes its prey.
But if I die, like the rest
Send my love for I cannot.
The explosive smell of gunfire abuses my nostrils.
It seems the price of freedom can only be paid for,
By those who will never see it. ■



Xavier Davis
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda



James Puglisi
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda



Louis Perez
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

SONNET OF WAVES

Hai An Vo · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

The waves swoop her up like seagulls with prey,
Examining every pore on her skin.
Dissatisfied with what has come their way,
Erode her till she fits the mould within.

Brine water sinks into her sunken scars,
Stinging much like the Devil's salty tongue.
Her body warped, torn and twisted so far;
The beauty gone so far for one so young.

But the sea decides to show otherwise,
Morphing into what seemed a true mirror.
A surface of perfection to the eyes,
But her own only saw her flaws clearer.

The vision on the beach made her 'perfect'
But with it, washed away her self-respect. ■



Megan Flores
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Sacrifice

Acrylic on Board

Respect is something you learn from your family.

THE NOTE

Jana Mikela Jacob · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

The rain poured as our car entered a narrow street. It felt familiar yet I couldn't seem to see myself fitting into this place. We reached a half yellow and half red house with a small gate. I felt a little tingle on my head as we approached the house. It felt as if I'd been here before. A short old, woman greeted us.

"Jessica! I'm so happy to see you. I really missed you so much." She giggled while caressing my face. Her smile somehow seemed familiar but I could've sworn I'd never seen her before.

I hugged her and greeted with kisses on her cheeks as per tradition.

"Hi uh, Grandma" I smiled even though I didn't really remember her. I must've been little the last time she saw me. My parents said that I was in a car accident when I was a kid and all our relatives were still be a blur to me.

"We'll leave her to you. Take care," my dad said while he was carrying my luggage inside. He smiled at me one last time. I don't know why but it felt as if he was concerned about me staying here.

"Don't worry, we'll be back in a week or so." My mum whispered while ruffling my hair and signaling me to go inside the house.

Those were their last words before I heard the door slam in my face. I really didn't know what was going on. My dad told me about attending some business this morning but I really wasn't sure.

"Jess? Are you hungry? I cooked your Dad's favorite," my grandma said while she set the table up for me.

"I'm actually still full, thanks, Grandma." I just waved my hand and went to my room to fix my clothes.

Days passed and I began to feel more comfortable. My grandma took care of me and always made sure that I'd eaten.

One day, I was looking through my stuff when I heard a noise from outside. I peered through the window and saw a little girl peeking from the back. Was there someone in this house besides us? I decided to approach the little girl and introduce myself. She smiled at me and gave me a folded note. Seconds later, she vanished. Weird.

I opened the note, *Beware of your dreams.*

Suddenly Grandma shouted, "JESS! It's dinner time!"

I placed the note inside my pocket and went to eat with Grandma. As usual, she spoiled me and gave me the best parts of the meal.

Later that night I felt the urge to go to the bathroom. I was walking towards it when I heard some mumbling voices. It sounded like my dad on the phone with my Grandma.

"Did she have any headaches? She might need her meds in case a panic attack happens. Remember, she needs to be in her best condition." I overheard on the phone.

Is he talking about me? Why do I have to be in my best condition?

"No, she's in her room for now. As long as she hasn't seen the backyard, she will be alright. I'm keeping her away as much as I can," said a worried Grandma. Backyard? What does she mean by that?

I decided to go out the back of the house, wondering what they were talking about. The path to the backyard... I've seen this before!

I ran as I felt a sudden rush of enjoyment. I'd been here before! I started running and saw a light emitting from a ram shackled shed. My parents must've been planning a surprise or something.

My hand reached out for the doorknob. I opened up the door slowly and I saw my dad.

"I knew it! You guys were-"

His eyes widened and looked at me as if he was angry. My head spun and shock rushed through my body.

"W-what is that? Why is there blood and body parts...?"

My hands started shaking. I felt something tap my shoe. It was a shrunken head of someone smiling. W-wait. That's the little girl from earlier!

I ran out from the shed then tripped over the footpath. My eyes closed and I blacked out.

I was in my room lying in my bed. Sweat beaded on my forehead. Was it all just a dream? I opened the note in my hand...*Beware of your dreams...*

I gritted my teeth in disgust, thinking of a plan to get out of this hell. The girl had warned me. My family couldn't be trusted. That respect was broken.

Suddenly Grandma came in.

"Jess!? Are you ok? What happened?"

"I don't remember, Grandma. I had a nightmare I guess?" I shrugged and hugged her.

She seemed satisfied with my answer. The note's ink bled into my sweaty hand. Escape was on my mind. ■

BACK IN TIME

Liya Eneyew · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

It was the year 2034, one project, a father, a son and one-time machine; time to go back to the year 2020. Dad pressed a couple of buttons and we stepped into the time machine, my face was filled with curiosity and excitement. All of a sudden I heard the sound, it sounded like a car engine starting. I went from clearly seeing things to only seeing pitch black and the machine started spinning to the point where I felt nauseous. The time machine began to slow down and the spinning became less aggressive. We stepped out only to be met with silence, the room white with dim lighting. My father picked up a glass ball and smashed it on the floor, the glass shattered into millions of pieces. A hologram came on with the months from January to December.

“Son this is a selection hologram, it allows us to pick which month in 2020 we want to review.”

“That’s so cool dad, look at all the options! Let’s start in order from January to December. Dad, I pick January first.”

“Okay son let’s step into January 2020.”

We went back into the time machine, and the aggressive spinning began. We hopped out only to see a place completely unfamiliar and I was faced with the hot breath of the sun pressing against my skin. Every inhale I took felt like a thousand rocks entering my throat, the air filled with thick smoke, making it hard to see. The scorching heat made it hard to speak.

“This is Australia son. Australia is currently facing one of its worst bushfires, with 17 million acres of land burned down, that’s more land than New York, Chicago and Mexico combined”

My father handed me a mask for the unbearable smoke.

The hologram showed a screen with information about the bushfires in Australia. I was shocked to see the number of days this occurred, 210 days were forever going to be imprinted in my mind.

We stepped back into the time machine and landed in a silent and deserted place. No car to be seen, no pedestrian walking, you could even hear the slightest droplets of rain falling from the roofs of these buildings. No coughing, no sneezing, something that was so common back home. The air felt more breathable and clear, policemen marching up and down from these buildings with their faces held up high and guns in their hands.

“This is China son. A deadly and new virus was introduced to the globe, this virus impacted almost

the whole world. It was a virus like no other, the flu couldn’t even compete with it. Many countries like China were accustomed to quarantine, countries like Australia, America and even Italy, a virus forever known as COVID-19.”

“Dad I just saw a man walk out with a mask.”

“Uhh yes Jeremiah, that is why I told you to keep your mask on, many people were forced to wear a mask to stop the spread of the virus.”

“That’s crazy dad!”

“Sure was.”

“This is the last place I’m going to take you, somewhere that you are very familiar with.”

We stepped out of the time machine and landed in a place which looked similar to Minneapolis. Hundreds of people were marching and screaming “Black Lives Matter!” with their fists held-up high. Posters flying in the air, people’s faces covered with torn shirts throwing bottles at cars, buildings on fire, stores broken and shattered into pieces, and a line of officers with battens standing like statues waiting to use force on the next person who approached them. It looked like a battlefield; a battle between citizens and officers.

“Son, your mother and I lived in a critical time where racism was a prime issue, especially in America. People that looked like you and I were dying in big numbers in the hands of police officers, even children at your age, simply because of their skin colour. People had enough and decided to protest. What started with a small protest in Minneapolis sparked many more protests all over America and all over the world. So people were screaming Black Lives Matter globally as one.”

“Dad, what happened to the virus?”

“Son, the virus was still spreading but humanity had to break down a fatal virus called racism.”

“Let’s head back in the time machine and go back home.”

“Dad is that all that happened in 2020?”

“No son, many more things occurred but I’ll leave that for another day.”

This experience opened my eyes, and it made me realise that we, as the future generation, should never forget to value respect, appreciation and solidarity because without it, we can never fully change the world like we want to. Thank you for listening to my back in time project. ■

DON'T LEAVE

Nhi Nguyen · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

I don't know who I am. I don't know who my real family is or where they are.

No one wanted me. I was an orphan whose parents abandoned and neglected me. No mother wanted to raise a daughter in China. They wanted a son who could fight against the Hans and bring honour to his country. I was just six years old when they left me to die on the streets; it was 14 years ago, but I still remember that they never cared about me.

I wandered through an eerie street. Where am I? This street doesn't look familiar. Though the streets hadn't heard laughter for a while, the streetlights continued to shine through the night. It looked like they simply wanted to share their amber glimmer, even if no one was to see or admire it. I hated these streets. The wind howled in agony, the trees creaked in pain... just like me. The rain started to pour and it pelted onto my tired body. I trudged through the darkness; the rain was thick enough for me to only be able to see a few meters in front of where I stood. I blindly made my way through the street, miraculously pushing open the door of a house, my hand fell through the empty space as I searched for the support of a wall.

I crept into the house; it acted as if it had a life of its own and its history echoed within the walls. I trembled with fear. All along the house you could see pain, as if this house was once cared for but now was deserted. I shivered throughout the night, my stomach grumbled. They say pain blows right out of you, but I think this trauma will forever haunt and become a part of me. Morning came but I was still starving. I begged and pleaded for someone to save me. Where are you?

That's when I heard the voices of people; they were trying to get into the house! A Western-Chinese couple walked towards me and held their hands out. I looked down and they offered me a piping hot baozi. The steam glistened and the aroma of the spices and herbs filled the atmosphere. At first I refused, but they insisted before I died of starvation. I slowly took a bite and the juices

exploded in my mouth and the heat it emitted warmed up my body. I will forever remember the sweet and savoury taste and of course the warmth, all in the form of a simple nice gesture.

I was brought to a mansion, which the woman and man owned; they were surely rich. I learnt that the woman's name was Lanlan and the man's, Dawai. They were unable to have children, so adopting me meant the world to them. They took me in and loved me like no other would. I thought that I had an immense amount of respect for my new parents, but it seemed they had even more for me. They were desperate for a child and being told that it was impossible tore their lives apart. Out of all who lived in China, these two amazing people wanted to be responsible for a girl, not a boy. I went from being an unwanted and unloved Chinese girl to a daughter of wonderful parents who adored me, all in the span of a week. Who would have known? I never would have thought this would happen to me; it was truly a miracle. Everyone thought I was an unlucky piece of flesh, but Lanlan and Dawai proved China wrong: you can have a daughter and respect her the same as a son.

To my biological parents, I am not angry and I do not hate you. I understand that you wanted to abide by the laws in China and follow the unfair 'one child policy.' We were poor and didn't have enough money to pay the penalty but why did you have to leave me to die on my own? I was only six. You always punished me because I never acted like a 'woman'. I was lucky to not be prepared like a doll to meet the matchmaker, to be forced to marry a man who I didn't know the slightest about... someone I didn't love. I could never pass as a perfect bride, or a perfect daughter. You abandoned me but still, I wasn't ready to say goodbye to you, I never was and I never will be.

I am a better person. I have a loving family, adequate food and water, shelter and most importantly, a sense of belonging. I am educated and fluent in English. If you do ever wish to find me, my name is Yu Yan and I am ready for you to return. ■

REWRITING THE FUTURE - A MEMOIR

Catriona Werny · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College



When I was eleven years old, I watched my Dad lose his battle to cancer.

I stood in the hospital next to his bed, my face wet and red, despite still not entirely having come to terms with the reality of the situation. There is no story more universal than this and yet there is something so excruciatingly personal when the most ordinary thing in the world happens to you; when you lose someone so close.

Beginning the year was the same as always. I was just moving into my last year of primary school, still with the same struggles I had been carrying my whole life. From what seems to be the moment I was born, I was already an emotional mess. A Highly Sensitive Perfectionist with anxiety is not a great combination, and yet the universe still decided that they would give me just that. Change was, and still is, my number one enemy and at the first sight of it, I break down. I was unaware of how much personal growth could come from such a traumatic event.

At this time, my aunt had come from London to stay with us. I knew that she was there to offer support to my mum and family, but I didn't understand at that time how close the end was. Most days after school, I went to the hospital to see my Dad because he wasn't in good enough condition to be at home. My parents, my brother, Ryan, and I would sit in a circle and play games with whatever activities we had brought along with us until Dad was exhausted. Most days followed this repetitive structure, but I didn't mind the slightest, especially when I found out that these would be some of our last moments, just the four of us together.

It was my Mum who turned to me one day and told me that it was all coming to an end, and in that exact moment, I remembered the beginning.

I remembered how when I was nine years old, I was woken up by my Dad telling me that he was on his way to work, just like he did every morning. Except that morning was different, because his head was shaved bald unlike how I had seen him only just the night before. It was after school that day when my Mum told my brother, barely even six years old, and me, that my Dad was sick. I didn't understand. I mean, he looked perfectly fine, apart from his new hairdo. But he was fine, right? He'd get through this because there was no way that something so terrible could happen to our family. I cried and so did my Mum. My brother stared at us, confused, too young to understand what was happening. I asked my Mum if he was going to die.

'I don't know, Catriona, but we have to hope for the best,' was her reply. I did hope for the best.

So, on the morning of the worst day of my life, I was still in denial, even all of these years later. By the time I lost a parent, I was supposed to be married with children, not an unstable eleven-year-old. My mum wasn't home; she had headed to the hospital early that morning and I was surprised when I received a phone call from her. She asked me whether I wanted to go into the hospital that day, preferably earlier in the day rather than later. I said yes, not wanting to miss an opportunity.

'It's his last day,' were the words that greeted me when I arrived at the hospital, my Mum's watery eyes meeting mine. I could tell that she was only

holding it together for the sake of my brother and me. For the next few hours, friends and family of my Dad all arrived to say goodbye.

But when it came my time to say goodbye, I... I wasn't prepared in the slightest. My mum, Ryan and my Dad's sister all stood around his bed alongside me, as we all choked back tears. I still remember my Mum turning to us and saying that he died with the four people he loved the most in the room with him. And that, that was the day I lost my Dad.

Everything changed. The week following, I didn't go to school. We planned a funeral. We attended the funeral. I went back to school. It was all a blur, as though I was watching myself go about life from afar, in a dream even. I felt alone, despite all of the support from my friends and the comfort from my grieving family. Every day, I would still cry at school, but for different reasons than that of previous years. There was this one day, however, where I cried in the morning. It didn't stop and a panic attack followed, because in that moment, I thought with my whole heart that I wouldn't be happy ever again. It was as if the whole matter truly dawned upon me for the first time and that reason exactly is how my life altered into something unexpected.

All because me, the emotional wreck, had a change in perspective.

It was when I ran out of tears that day that I realised that I had been crying my whole life. I understood that I didn't choose to. I understood that I was highly sensitive; everything overwhelmed me, it was just how my brain was programmed, but only after your life as you know it collapses. Nothing seems so terrible anymore. Every time I'm faced with a challenge, it's because I remember a time when I ran out of tears and I can overcome it. I wish more than anything that I could have my Dad wake me up on a Monday morning or have him cook me my favourite egg-fried-rice for dinner. I wish that we could go for runs together like he told me that we would do one day. But wishes are all they are and whilst I never go a day without missing him, I understand I can't wait around every day for my egg-fried-rice.

So, revisit memories, reflect on them and then rewrite the future, because if you can overcome this, then the only thing you can't do is read minds. Even when broken and bruised; persevere.

Even when completely shattered on the inside; even when you are sure it can't get better; persevere.

Even when there is no hope for a better life, a better future; persevere. ■

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

Tilly Fleming · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

When I was a child my friend and I would play,
In the thickets of her garden, there we would
always stay,
But when a twisted, contorted order of events,
brought this virus to our shores,
I longed to be let out to see the beautiful
outdoors.
I even envied clouds above, crying tears of rain,
For they had never felt this longing, constrictingly
sharp pain.

I miss my friend, her playful footsteps pounding
on the earth.
I miss the times we both would laugh, with tones
of joy and mirth.
For us the laid back, minimal garden seemed to
be a forest.
Listening to the delighted birds, and the tunes of
songs they chorused.
But now I fear what our play space has become,
Pondering this thought makes my heart go dully
numb.

But as I open the door since what seems like a
lifetime,
Slowly I became aware of the truly sublime.
The birds we once listened to, in the garden where
we played,
Seems to have grown, while at home was where
we stayed.
Now as this virus prepares to depart.
The coldness and numbness has vanished from
my heart.
What we have gone through seems to have at
least brought one good,
And there she is, smiling and laughing, my friend
from childhood.

When I first saw this opportunity arise, dozens of thoughts about possible writing subjects came into my mind. In the end however, I decided on this one, for while this piece does mention and accept that what we are living through isn't ideal, it encourages all of us to think of the bright sides of the pandemic, even though for a lot of people this may be difficult. All around us nature is flourishing, the air is clearer, and wildlife is thriving. ■

ANXIOUS MINDS

Jemma Brodie · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Trapped. Sturdy house walls surround me.
Trapped. In a constant trance. Trapped. I
stand trembling. Thoughts, are consumed by fear.
“Unprecedented Times” reporters’ words echo.
Turmoil in my head worsens. Overwhelmed sides
of me think irrationally believing that hope is
something that... never existed. Prominent figures
in the media say, we hope this virus will end soon,
we hope that we can return to our “normal lives”
again. Words of reassurance can’t reach me.

They only try and yet they fail to comfort me. Will
there be a second wave? This people question. I
know a wave is coming, it’s not the second wave
though, it’s actually the third. The second wave
arrived abruptly. It swept uneasy waters over me,
and over other anxious minds. It started with a sick
feeling in the stomach and then it flooded minds. It

destroyed hope. The thought that things would be
ok. It made minds think irrationally. Now infected
minds are just waiting for the next wave.

They feel that there is no chance that it won’t
come. Even these infected minds know that whilst
we are isolated we are physically untouchable. Yet
as someone with an anxious mind I know too well
that any words stated in newspapers, or words
blasted on the tv and radio are always capable
of touching damaged minds. My thoughts about
the mark that COVID-19 will leave on the world
now make up my deepest fears. My home is a safe
haven from being touched by others. Even though
no person could touch me there I know that fears
break the law. They will follow me, like a shadow.
Deep down I know that they will always be closer
than 1.5 metres away from me. ■

THE QUEST FOR FREEDOM – CINDERELLA REIMAGINED

Nina Browne · Year 9 · *Star of the Sea College*

You never really knew me.
I just stood to the side
Watched my mother
Inflict her cruelty upon others.

Cinderella said she forgave us.
But did she really mean it?
After all my mother had done
Why would anyone forgive her?

I watched her walk away
With her handsome Prince.
I felt my heart shatter
As I realised I wanted that too.

I wanted a life of my own.
One without my mother.
Perhaps with my sister
Or with a husband.

But I was trapped
In my mother's web.
Her lies had weaved together
The home I longed to escape.

I was her canvas.
She painted me
Experimenting with society
And forcing me to them.

I was never happy.
And as I watched my stepsister

Twirl across the floor with the prince
I realised I wanted that too.

I wanted to be noticed
I wanted to be looked at.
Not just a shadow behind my mother.
Someone who is known for herself.

If I were to tell her
She'd call me selfish
Ungrateful and stupid
A useless daughter.

Freedom seemed only a wish away,
But no fairy godmother came to me.
So, I sat myself down
And let my mother paint me.

Paint me as a faithful daughter.
Faithful and accepting
Of her harsh treatments
Towards my stepsister.

How can one bear that?
How can one see the difference?
Between a girl who is trapped
And a girl who longs for freedom?

You can't.
Because they are the same.
And so many of them exist.
But you never hear their pleas. ■

COME SEE ME BY THE SHORELINE

Coco Dwyer · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

Come see me by the shoreline
and let the sickly salty sand stick to you like
sesame seeds to warm bread
come where little girls paint blueprints in the sand
with their pinky fingers
and walk through rock pools like they're tiptoeing
on tortoise shells
climbing the pebbles as far as they can go

Come see me by the shoreline
I promise your mother will never know
and if you don't like the feeling of the sand
between your toes
then I will build you a boat of driftwood and
dreams
a crystal clam shell crown
gently placed upon your golden head
and you can rule the seas instead

Come see me by the shoreline
and we'll whisper to the sea that we love her
and we know she loves us back because I promise
if you stand on the waters very edge
the white caped waves will kiss your toes
but don't go in too deep she might just pull you
under
just like that man whose name no one knows
or maybe they chose to forget

Still, come see me by the shoreline
and in a world of hand-held flashlights we, we
will be pure constellations
guiding weary travellers with wrinkled skin and
calloused palms
we will build a home in our very own bones
our names won't live in any phone book or be
carved onto the hull of any ship
instead they will be whispered in the words of the
stories passed down and down and down
until our names land into the palm of someone
else who listens for the waves.

And if a southerly wind starts to blow, and the
sky gets dark,
if the tide goes out and the ocean falls asleep
then I will wrap a blanket around your frame
and we will lie on our backs
until the sand remembers our spines every curve
slowly we will count the stars
and then when we are done we will give each of
them a name of someone we miss
the man taken by the waves and the girl gone too
soon

Come see me by the shoreline or the seaside or in
the summertime I really don't mind ■

THE POWER OF A HEART

Maya Soha · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Rebecca and her mum were watching SBS news. It was the beginning of May, 2020 in the middle of a lockdown. “All visitors to Portugal will not be able to leave until June.” “Oh no! Mum does that mean Layla wouldn’t be able to return home from the Azores in two weeks?” “No she won’t sweetie, i’m so sorry!”, replied her mum, putting a comforting arm around Rebecca’s shoulders.

“I don’t want you to forget me Layla!” Rebecca sobbed. She was a tall, pretty girl with honey golden hair sitting by her window in the moonlight. She was wearing her moonstone pendant, which when connected with her best friend Layla’s topaz pendant, formed a heart.

As the two girls were thinking about each other from opposite sides of the world, they held their pendants to their hearts and whispered “I will never forget you!” Suddenly, it seemed that the moon and sun both slowly halved and reunited in the form of a heart. It was like a dream! All at once, the moon and sun heart shone with a blinding light, that lifted Rebecca and Layla off their feet. It looked as though a light in the shape of a heart emanated from both girls’ hearts and travelled to each other to join together.

When the girls returned to the ground, they found themselves, not in their homes, but in a white space. “Layla!” “Rebecca!” The girls ran to each other, but were stopped by an invisible force field. “Layla

what happened?” Layla’s face was blank. Suddenly a thought occurred to her. “Maybe the pendants are able to penetrate the force field! Rebecca, your moonstone, press it against my topaz pendant!” Rebecca responded, “Yes, I understand now! We might not be able to be in the same place, but with the power of our hearts we will always be together!” With that, the two girls connected the pendants and with a gust of wind, were back in their own houses.

“Rebecca! Rebecca!” A voice was calling at her side. She opened her sleepy eyes as the gleaming, morning sun shone through the window. “What. Layla. You’re here?” Rebecca questioned. “Yes, I got you something!” Layla handed her a glowing, moonstone pendant shaped as half a heart. “Look I’ve got the same one, but a topaz.” Layla exclaimed. “Wow, thank you!” said Rebecca. “Look, if you place them together they-” “Maybe we shouldn’t do that right now...” Rebecca interrupted, placing her pendant back around her neck. “Why not?” Puzzled Layla. Well, you never know the power of the heart.” Rebecca replied.

The short story ‘The Power of a Heart’ tells us that even if we are not with someone it doesn’t mean they will forget us, our friendship will connect us. In times of hardship, we can stay positive and persevere through difficult times, knowing that there are people who support and love us. ■

PLANET 9

Teresa Sant · Year 9 · CRC Melton

I look down at the crumpled letter in my hand as I wait for my name to be called. The hard concrete is rough to stand on and the sun is blazing down on me with a vengeance. There are about 500 people waiting here. All of us standing together in this wide, unfamiliar space.

The overwhelming stench of sweat and body odour covers me like a blanket and I begin to realise how long I've been standing here – it's been almost 3 hours.

Babies are screaming because of the heat, their mothers and fathers scrambling to keep them quiet. I can't even begin to imagine what they are going through right now. After what feels like a lifetime of waiting I finally hear my dreaded name get called.

"Daniel Alvarez. 32. Doctor. Please make your way to the ship."

As I slowly climb up the tall staircase I feel the piercing stare of the hundreds of people watching my ascent. I look out past the gates of the cosmodrome and see the hundreds of thousands of people banging on the gates to be let in. They are screaming and yelling in an attempt to be allowed to board the ship.

"So this is what the world has come to" I mutter to myself as the crowd gets increasingly violent.

I reach the top of the staircase and look out one more time, soaking in everything around me knowing full well it will be the last time I'll ever see this godforsaken planet.

I enter the spaceship and join the 50 people that have already boarded sitting on the floor of a large circular room. Once I am as comfortable as possible on the cold, aluminium floor, I look up and see a stout, rotund man making his way towards me. His dark hair is slicked back and he's wearing a suit tailored to perfection.

"Hello. My name is Emmanuel Sorokin. You and I are the only people on the ship at the moment who aren't part of a family or a couple. Who are you by the way?"

"Umm, my name's Daniel Alvarez," I say reticently, "I'm a doctor."

"So how did you get a letter to board the ship then? I was under the impression that they were only given to those with a certain..." he paused and waved his hand in the air, "...importance."

"Well from my understanding they were trying to group together the people who will be most useful

in an extraterrestrial environment" I say as politely as I can, not wanting to offend this seemingly very outspoken businessman. Emmanuel stares at me as if merely saying that sentence makes me guilty of committing a crime. After an extended period of time, he begins to notice the mass protests surrounding the cosmodrome. He stares at the rightfully violent and aggressive crowds and exclaim: "What's wrong with those people? They need to realise their lives aren't worthy of being anything other than a part of our crumbling earth!"

"With all due respect, but what exactly makes those fighting for the opportunity to save themselves from their own home less worthy of life than us?" I reply in defence.

"They're all dirty and poor. They aren't worthy of anything! Never have been, never will be" he said as he stood up from the spot we were sitting in and stormed off to the other side of the room. I thought that after all the disaster and destruction nobody thought in that way anymore, but I guess there'll always be people like him.

A couple of hours pass and everyone has boarded the ship. I hear an ominous beeping sound coming from above me. Everyone has gone silent in fearful anticipation of launching. The head of Atheana Space Association walks in to announce the countdown.

He says there's a minute to go.

The tension grows as the clock slowly ticks.

The strange beeping grows increasingly menacing. I can hear the thumping of valves as the engine is pressurised. There is a low rumbling sound as things begin to shake violently.

The main engine lights turn on and the shaking becomes out of control.

We lift slowly off the launch pad, the speed quickly building up.

The ship shakes and rattles along for a minute, and then we hear a bang.

Then another.

And another.

Until...

We've done it.

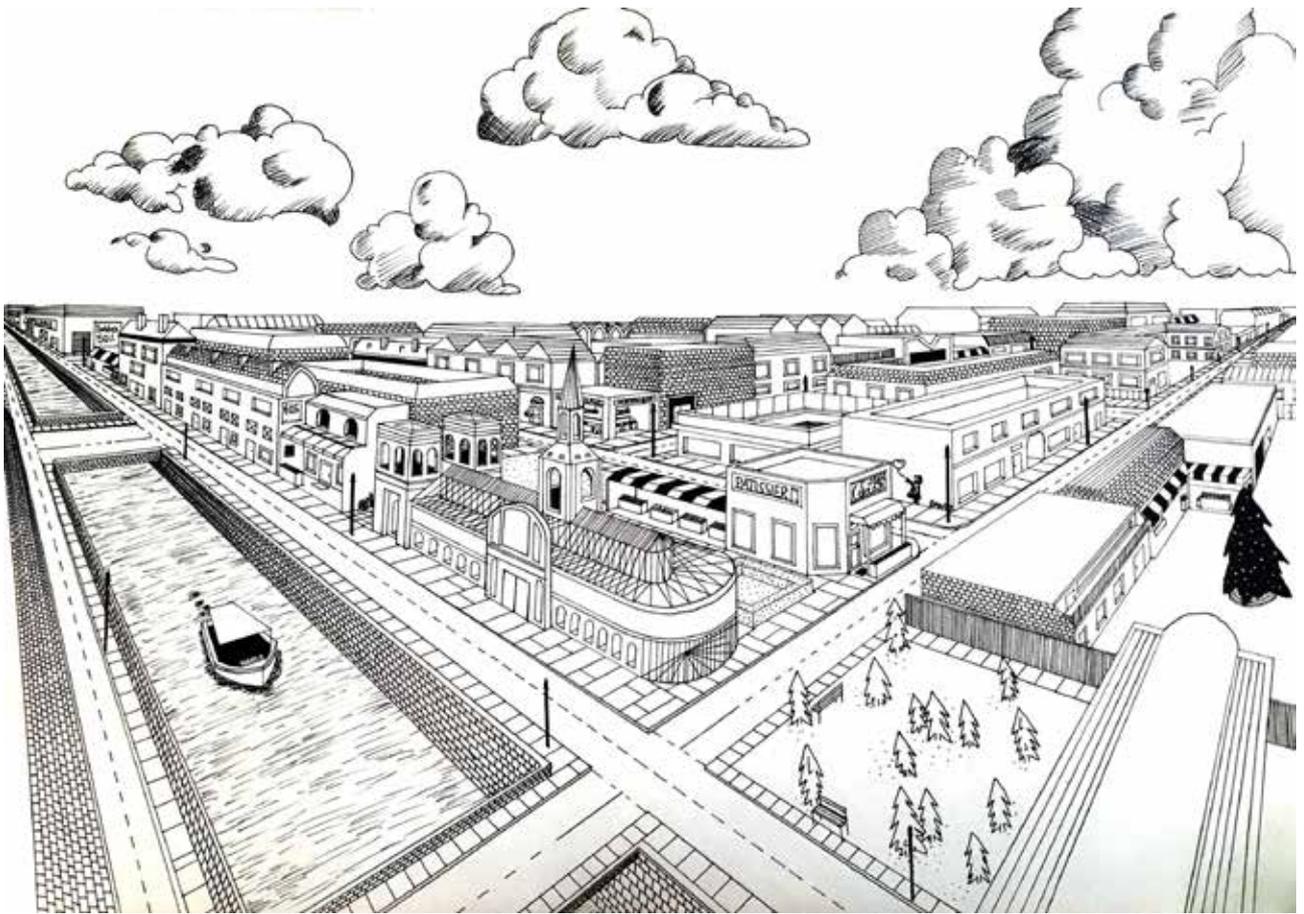
We've left the Earth's atmosphere.

We're on our way to a new home. ■



Abui Dau
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Painting



Abby Timms
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Two point perspective



Achan Tong
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Coloured pencil



Alanis Furtado
Year 7 · CRC Melton

Greylead pencil



Aleisha De Niese
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Trista Duncan
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Photography

Respect for dance. Despite all the hardships of 2020, it has not stopped any of the dancers in the community. We have connected through social media, posting daily to keep sharing what we love doing.

COVID-19 BREAK

Emily Auteri · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

What did I miss?

Over lockdown, the things that I missed were not being able to swim and see all of my friends. I was so used to the fact that I get up early in the morning and work so hard. Even though I was given a workout to do every day, and we were in a Zoom meeting every day with my coach and my squad, it was not the same as really seeing them and going to training every morning and working hard.

What am I grateful for?

Over the break I was getting really stressed about school and swimming and it was all just getting on top of me, but luckily for me I had my mum and dad that I could talk to about what I was feeling and what was bothering me.

I am so grateful that my entire family was so supportive of me and I am so grateful that all of my teachers cared so much about my education and made sure that I was doing well with my work.

I think that before lockdown I took everything for granted like school and my swimming and seeing others. This has taught me that I should not take anything for granted. ■



Olivia Hunt
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Alana Morley
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Photography

The flowers in my front yard remind me of the natural beauty in our world and how a small patch of colour can brighten up anyone's day.

WHAT ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR?

Christiana Olayemi · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

During my time in quarantine, also known as isolation,
I took the time to reflect on my life and came to a clear
realisation,
That I may be one of the luckiest people in this whole
entire nation.

There are so many people in our world today that have had
to undergo so much pain and dismay,
They've lost family and friends and have had their
happiness taken away,
They have struggled for days on end and their lives have
turned from bright yellow to grey.

I feel for those who have experienced such sorrow,
And I pray to God that he will give them people to trust
and someone to follow.
If only we could all go back in time and live like we used to
without feeling so shallow,
So that the others around us feeling down can look forward
to tomorrow.

I may not know their struggle and I may not know
their pain,
But what I do know is that I'll always appreciate the life
that I have all the same.
My family, my friends, my home, and my name,
Are all things that I am grateful for and all things that have
kept me sane.

I'm thankful for my teachers as well,
For all the time they gave up and for all the things they had
to tell.
I'm thankful for the knowledge that they now share,
And for all the things they do that really show that
they care.

I thank the Lord for my good health and home,
For the food I have to eat and for the love that he
has shown.
His protection over my loved ones has been a real blessing,
And I've loved living every moment of isolation
without stressing.

So, what exactly am I grateful for?
Well, that's actually pretty simple.
The things that I am grateful for now are the things that I
was grateful for before this whole pandemic even started.
Everything in my life now is as it should be.
And I couldn't be happier,
Because I definitely feel more free. ■



Madeline Russell
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Respect for the fictional characters from TV shows
and movies that got me through tough times.

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

Trinity Black · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Life was so different.
We all had to learn how to live again but in a
different environment.
Life became more isolated, life became alone.
Life was different for the whole world.
We were all struggling together.
The future is unknown,
We don't know how we will go.
But together we are united,
We stand together as a whole,
And whatever we face we face together.
We are a community, a society
Life is different and hard, and it will be for a while
But that's okay,
Because we still have good in our lives,
We still have each other,
We have our family,
Our friends,
And even strangers;
But life is good as we are a whole, together. ■



Aaron Moffitt
Year 8 · Aquinas College



Diya Vinod
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Ashley Beley
Year 12 · St. Peter's College

ALEC CAMPBELL: THE LAST MAN STANDING

Alix Moran · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College



Alec Campbell at the age of 16.

I've never really understood my family's heritage. The decision made to pass down a name, continuing a story someone started, even though they are no longer a part of it. It just never made sense to me. Why generations of people in my family have taken the middle name Campbell. So, I decided to find out. I thought the best way to find out would be to ask my parents and grandparents, and that's how I learnt the truth about my name, and the hero I was named after.

Over a century ago on 26 February 1899, a child was born by the name of Alexander Campbell, soon to be nicknamed Alec. He was born into a family of five children with his parents, Marian Throther and his father Samuel Campbell. Alec was the eldest son out of the Campbell siblings, Malcolm the second eldest, is my great grandfather. On 2 July 1915, two months after the landing at Gallipoli, when Alec was merely 16 years old, he made the decision to enlist in the army to fight in Europe during World War I. Although he was two years under the legal age, even with parental permission, his parents were fine with him leaving to fight, as they didn't know what awaited soldiers at war. Therefore, Alec became a part of the 15th Battalion, 4th Infantry Brigade of the Australian Imperial Force. Soon to be known as 'The Kid' amongst other soldiers.

The reinforcements Alec was a part of were sent

to Alexandria in Egypt where they spent six weeks fighting to claim land back from the opposing forces during the battle of *Hill 971 and 60* in August of 1915. As the fighting ensued, mother nature took its toll as conditions worsened. With blizzards and storms raging night and day, sickness broke out. Many soldiers were treated in Field Ambulances, one of which would soon announce the end of Alec's service in the army. After many hospital visits, Alec was diagnosed with palsy and right facial paralysis that would soon take his right eye. On 22 August 1916 Alec's journey in the Australian Army officially ended, returning him to a somewhat normal life back in Tasmania with his family. Or so everyone thought. After the war Alec went on to do many things in his life: boxing, carpentry and yacht racing being just a few. In 1924, marrying his first wife and starting his own family, eventually fathering nine children until he was 69 with his first and second wives. At the age of 102, Alec became the last surviving Anzac from World War I. He died at the age of 103 with his wife of 44 years, Kate, by his side, with a state funeral held in his honour.

Several books have been written as well as stamps, medallions and coins have been made and minted in honour of Alec and all Anzacs. It was very special to discover the story behind my family's heritage and the connection I have to Alec Campbell; the last man standing. ■



Deaken Perera
Year 9 · St. Peter's College



Lance DeVera
Year 9 · St. Peter's College



Charlotte Francis
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Tristan Vichittavong
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

UNTITLED

Oliwia Hoehle · Year 9 · St. Peter's Collage

Long ago, when the sun and moon were still young, they lived on Earth among their people. The people were filled with great veneration for their sun, as her light armed the Earth and grew their harvests. Although they adored the sun, they rejected the moon, for her night was a time of vulnerability and darkness.

While the beams of the sun drew love and affection from others, the moon was stuck in the shadow of another. And as time went on, darkness filled the heart of the moon and her unhappiness grew. The sun however, paid no attention to the moon's ill-treatment for she was blinded by her own light. The moon could not live on Earth where she was

mistreated and not given equal respect to that of the sun. Unable to endure anymore pain, she let go of her earthly attachments to live out her days in the night sky. Upon finding out about her actions, the sun regretted her treatment of the moon, and wished that she had loved her as she deserved.

The sun cupped her ashes and released them into the wind, where they found their place among the moon, shining alongside her. A final gift, before joining her in the skies.

"Life is too short to waste your time on people who don't respect, appreciate, and value you."- Roy T Bennet ■

THE BLUSH FROM THE HEART

Devnika Samadith Bogahapitiya · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

During a time like this
Talking to others is key
It can often be a bliss
For it is as relaxing as a big blue sea

Giving them the chance
To express their feelings
While doing a little dance
And giving them good blessings

A simple chat will do
But a gift will be even better

For it will liven them up if they are blue
Just like sunny weather

On some days they will be glum.
But a little talk can cheer them up
So can a simple hum
For it can make them jump

Throughout this entire time
It's important to stay in touch
We can make our mind chime
By being the one who makes others blush ■

A TRUE FRIEND

Maddison Michaud · Year 7 · St. Peter's Collage

Cleo walked to school in her school uniform. Her pants were covered with holes at her knees and her clothes were getting too small for her. As she stepped the back of her shoe was falling off due to the broken buckle. Cleo got to school and walked past all the other students watching only the ground as she went. She had no friends. No one had bothered to talk to her all year. She put her bag away, took her books out and went to class.

'Turn to the person next to you and talk about why you think books are better than movies or vice versa,' the teacher told the class.

Cleo turned to the person next to her but they had already turned away, she spun to the person on her right but they were already deep into their conversation. Cleo sat there alone thinking over her points about why books are better than movies. She was very smart. Cleo spent a lot of time in the library because she could not afford to go to the places everyone else went.

The bell rang and everyone got up to leave. Cleo opened her bag and took out her sandwich which had been squashed by her books. As she walked someone stuck out their leg and she tripped over it.

'Watch where you're going!' the student yelled at Cleo.

Cleo ignored them, she was used to it. People had been teasing Cleo for a while now and more people had started to join. The bell rang to go to her next class, Cleo got her books and turned to walk to class. Someone knocked her books out of her hand but instead of the usual 'watch it' someone quickly picked her books up and passed them back to Cleo.

'I'm so sorry', she said to Cleo 'My name's Lauren. What's yours?'

Cleo was taken aback for a moment, not once had anybody bothered to talk to her or help her.

'I'm umm Cleo,' she finally got out

'Well nice to meet you Cleo. I'll see you later then', Lauren said in response and walked to class.

Cleo sat in class alone once again but this time a memory was prominent in her mind. She couldn't stop thinking about how she could have just made

a friend. Cleo couldn't help smiling. Even if Lauren didn't want to be her friend Cleo was still happy because someone had talked to her – actually talked to her and not just made rude comments about her clothes or belongings. Cleo glanced at the clock, it was nowhere near lunchtime.

After what seemed like forever the bell rang. Once again students stood up and left. Cleo put her books away and slowly got out her lunch hoping that she would get to see Lauren. Lauren came out of a classroom, talking to a group of girls. Cleo noticed that some of the girls were part of the group that bullied her. Cleo was surprised, was Lauren just pretending to be nice to her?

Lauren walked over to Cleo. Lauren smiled and sped up – nearly running.

'Hi, have time to talk?' Lauren asked Cleo as she put her things away.

'Yeah,' Cleo replied. 'Are the girls you were talking to nice?' Cleo couldn't help asking.

'Not really,' Lauren whispered to her.

'Oh,' Cleo said.

They sat down and talked. Not about anything, just talking. Someone walked past and said something rude about Cleo. Lauren was about to fight them but Cleo told her it wasn't worth it.

The next day arrived and Cleo was walking to school when Lauren caught up to her. Someone walked past and stared at Cleo. A girl that Lauren was friends with walked past.

'Oh, hi Lauren, why are you talking to her,' she pointed at Cleo.

Lauren couldn't hold it in anymore. It was so unfair.

'Well at least Cleo has a real personality, unlike you Cleo doesn't say things for popularity or attention. Also, Cleo doesn't say anything to intentionally hurt someone, almost everyone knows that bullies are just unhappy with themselves so they try to bring other people down!' Lauren yelled at her.

Lauren knew there were better ways to handle her situation but she didn't care. She stood up for her real friend and that is all that mattered to her. ■

2020

Thom Hose · Year 7 · Padua College

2020, the year that has gone completely wrong. Bushfires, floods and now a worldwide pandemic. Is there anything else? They throw Black Lives Matter protests in which make the pandemic much worse and deaths that stop the world. What's next.

At the start of the year, Australia had its own nation-wide problem. Bushfires wiped out towns and ruined communities. Kangaroo Island was a wasteland, 480 million animals died during these bushfires, many koalas, kangaroos and native animals to the areas. Firefighters tried their absolute hardest to smother the flames, but they just couldn't do it, many firefighters died from the fires. Once the bushfires were controlled, all the red skies covering Australia, went away. Yes, the sky was red. Smoke was everywhere as well. Even towns far away from the fires felt the heat, the red skies and the smoke, but the firefighters made Australia proud. They are known as the heroes of Australia. Everybody has thanked them for their efforts. Along the road athletes and celebrities donated millions of dollars for the fires, and we are thankful it didn't wipe out Australia.

Next thing was the build up of the pandemic, Covid-19, a.k.a Coronavirus. Coming out of Wuhan, China, Coronavirus spread all throughout the world. We finally got serious about it once it hit Australia and other countries. People from several different sports tested positive which was a setback for a restart in sports. People all over the world have been in lockdown and most countries are still in lockdown being quarantined. Face masks are now essential for people twelve and over if you go outside your house. This has been

the biggest pandemic since an influenza A (H1N1) virus emerged, but it was nowhere near as big as coronavirus. Covid is still impacting the world as many people are still being affected by it and some are dying because of it. People are losing jobs because of this virus, people have to work job keeping hours just to keep their jobs. Remote learning has become a big part of our lives as we can't go to school or work because we will spread the virus. We have had to stay 1.5 metres away from each other to stop the spread.

After the death of George Floyd, an African American, countries have been out of control. Minneapolis Police Officer Derek Chauvin knelt down on George Floyd's neck making him unable to breathe which resulted in his death. Riots went off in America as looting and buildings being burnt down started. Protests were happening all over the world. Australia had their own which we weren't meant to have. It is suspected people caught coronavirus because of that. In front of the White House a mural has been painted and the plaza outside has been renamed to the Black Lives Matter Plaza. It has sparked rage and made others remember all of the other African-American lives lost due to police officers. Just another turn in 2020.

Now, 2020 has been rough for families but it brings families closer together as not being able to go outside. So it is easy for families to hang out inside. We just need to have a better mindset for 2021 and hope 2021 is nowhere near as bad as 2020. We don't need another virus and more bushfires. 2020 has been a rough year but we can power through to the end! ■



Katie Alsop
Year 10 · Padua College

Complimentary Nature

RESPECT

Keira Pentz · Year 7 · Padua College

In December 2019, an event occurred which meant the world would never be the same again. The first man was diagnosed with Covid-19. At first, people thought it was a joke, comparing it to the beer Corona. But the world soon realised that this was anything but fun.

In Australia today, the total number of cases of the coronavirus are 12,428 and the total deaths are 126. There have also been 388 cases in the last 24 hours and there are 3,267 active cases.

The definition of respect is “a feeling of deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities or achievements.” In recent months I have witnessed events and felt this for so many different reasons and for so many different people in all walks of life.

Our teachers who have had to adapt to teaching their students in a whole new way, something not taught at University but learnt as they went. They missed out on holidays where they could rest but instead had to plan for the next term. They did

this whilst juggling their own families who were in lockdown and home schooled too.

Neighbours, who have organised rainbow trails and bear hunts for children to make lockdown a bit more fun!

The police have to enforce new lockdown rules making sure we are all safe in our homes and keeping us from harm.

Healthcare workers working on the frontline, risking their lives to help others in ICU with the coronavirus and in doing so, endangering their family and risking them to the coronavirus.

Some families have relatives who are dying from Covid-19 and they aren't allowed to visit them for their own safety. And if you think that's bad, if their family member died they would have a funeral through a zoom.

Finally, I show big respect to all of us, the students, who have to endure their parents and siblings 24-7...I salute you! ■

SCORCHED

Jaques Menage · Year 7 · Padua College

Tongues of fire, leaping from tree to tree,
The eyes of the flame, watching the people flee,
All it wanted was a friend, and to be respected, to
be free,
But however hard it tried, a monster was all they
would see,

Then they came, in their bright red truck,
Taking out hoses, with water they struck,
Extinguishing his light, his life,
Landing him in inescapable strife,
As the water snuffed out the fire,
The people would stand back and admire,
The brave work of the Furies,
Running into battle like Valkyries,

Through all his time, he had never seen such
bravery,
At the moment he found himself in a reverie,
He had caused so much pain, you see,
That he said, “I shall lie down, and let the water
wash over me!”

All he wanted was a friend,
But that had ended people's lives, to a great
extent,
Now he could see, he did not need to pretend,
He had a friend, himself, right to the very end. ■

RESPECT IN COVID TIMES

Byron Nagle · Year 7 · Padua College

The cold wind stung my exposed arms like tiny needles, it was 10 degrees, but I kept working to get the jobs done. The dirt on my gloves weighing them down from my fingers. It had only been half an hour working on the plants but it felt like years in the misty freezing cold wind. The clouds blocking the sun from ever shining its light. But we all kept working. We had to keep our house intact and tidy, for it is one of the limited things we can do in lockdown.

The voices of the Prime Ministers and Presidents stuck in my head “During times like this it may be tough, but we can get through it” finally done,

I walked back inside the house. It felt cold before but now it was as hot as a beach on a summer’s day. We sit together and hope it will be over soon, it starts to rain. The box of masks left waiting on the kitchen bench for the inevitable shopping trip to happen soon. Respecting everyone’s efforts for this Pandemic to end as well as our own.

During Covid times we must stay strong. We must follow all the rules to ensure we are kept safe. We need to be respectful in following all the rules, wearing masks and social distancing.

Staying apart keeps us together. ■



Keira Pentz
Year 7 · Padua College

Frontline Heroes

My inspiration for my artwork was admiration for the doctors and nurses who went to work every day to help care for those who became gravely ill with Coronavirus. This was a new illness which is very contagious and can lead to death in some cases. A lot of these workers had children and families at home and they risked their lives every day to help families in need.



David Cachia
Year 12 · Kolbe Catholic College

Sunset Series – Beach Sunset; Evening Sunset

Photographs

THE LOVED ONE

Latasha Pryn · Year 11 · Kolbe Catholic College

This isn't happening! Not again! I won't allow it!

My son talks to me from across the kitchen counter, but I can't hear a word. All I can think about is *why is fate bringing this back into my life? Haven't I suffered enough?*

I feel my daughter's hand in mine. She always seems to know when I need her.

"So what do you think mum?" my son asks. "Can I sign up for the army?"

There's that word again. Army!

I can't make out the words on the form he pushes towards me. I want to say no, but he sounds so passionate; his face, now almost a man's, is so determined. I don't want to be one of those parents who ruins their child's life, but am I not saving it by denying him this?

I try to speak but my words fail me. All I can muster is a name. Just one.

"Antonio."

"Yes mum?"

"Not you, your uncle," I whisper, barely audible.

"Who?" both my children ask simultaneously, filling me with shame, hitting my stomach and forcing me to regurgitate the memories, overwhelming emotions sucking the wind out of me. It had been a long time since I'd last remembered.

"It is almost the thirty third year since it had happened. We were sitting at the dining room table having our dinner when my brother suddenly spoke up. Just blurted it out.

"I want to enlist to fight in the war," he'd said.

There was stunned silence, before we began to yell.

"You're too young," my dad had said. "You've got the rest of your life to live."

"It's my duty," he'd replied. "I'd be doing it for everyone – for our family, the families of all those who couldn't do it. I want to join the other men of our town who will fight for our country."

I remember thinking he'd sounded so noble and brave.

"We'll win the war and we won't be invaders anymore," he'd continued. "We'll be Australians. We will belong and have the respect we deserve. And so will our children and so will all of their generations to come. I have to do this for them."

He was right. We could all see that this was

something he really had to do. So amidst my mother's silent tears, we gave him our blessing.

Antonio signed up the next day and was gone before the end of the week.

After the first few months we started receiving letters from him. Every day after school I would rush home so I could check for any new letters. He always seemed so positive and excited in them. He never mentioned any of the fighting; it was always about where he was and the friends he'd made or the cute nurse he was madly in love with.

Six months later we received a letter telling us that he'd married that nurse. Her name was Lucy. That was when the letters slowed down. Then they just stopped.

We became lost in our everyday lives. Dad's condition had deteriorated, and the only men left in the town were under the age of 15 or over 75. The rest had gone to war.

It wasn't until the third year after Antonio had left that we received another letter. I got home and found it sitting there, on its own, in our letterbox. I carried it into the house. Its envelope was identical to all the letters Antonio had sent, however this one was addressed formally.

To Mr and Mrs Amato.

I placed it on the dining room table. I sat, staring at it, not moving.

My parents finally came home. When they entered the dining room, they looked at me, then looked to the object of my gaze. After a brief pause, my mother reached out to hold my hand. We heard the rip of tearing paper as my father pulled out the contents and read the letter aloud.

"To Mr and Mrs Amato, It is with much regret and sorrow that we have to inform you that your son, Antonio Amato, one of our well respected soldiers, was killed on the battle field. He fought with pride and will be sorely missed. We are so very sorry for your loss."

I don't remember much after that except running to my room, crying non-stop and promising myself I would never let anyone I love be hurt like this again. Antonio was not just my big brother, he was my best friend and he was always there when I needed him – just like both of you are for each other."

I stared at my children through blurred, nostalgic eyes.

“Is that where you got our names from?” asked Lucy. I nodded. “From the first man I loved and the woman who loved him just as much.”

“What happened to Lucy?” asked my daughter, with tears rolling down her cheeks.

“Well, naturally, she was heartbroken. She continued to write for the next few years, but then her letters became less frequent, and then they stopped.”

Lucy sniffed and mumbled, more to herself than to

me, “How does someone get over something like that? How do you carry on in life after that?”

I make eye contact with my son. At least now he knows why I need to say what I’m about to say.

“Antonio, you know I love you and I respect whatever you feel you need to do. But I can’t give you my blessing.” He nodded in acknowledgement, but the determination burned in his eyes.

“Mum, I love and appreciate all you have done for me, but I feel it is my duty.” ■



Claudia Curseri
Year 10 · Kolbe Catholic College

—————
Cold Summer

—————
Watercolour

THE LIFE OF MY GRANDFATHER

Lucas Clarke · Year 12 · Aquinas College

Creative response to Rear Window

The hall is silent. Each footstep I take knocks against the hardwood floor, echoing amidst the stillness of the room. I make my way through the rows of chairs, filled with black suits and sorrowful whimpers. Finally, I reach the lectern and pull a crumpled piece of paper from my blazer pocket. I look up once at the crowd of people before me, feeling my stomach twist itself into a knot. “I thought that my grandfather’s funeral would be hard, a day of grief and misery, but as I sit here, the feeling is bittersweet.” I pause to inhale deeply, feeling the quiver in my throat. “It’s bittersweet because I know that my grandfather, L.B. Jeffries, lived a complete and happy life, full of adventure.”

After the funeral, the drive back to Jeff’s apartment is lonely. As I make my way up the stairs, for a moment I forget that there’s nobody on the other side of the door. I guess this is how Jeff felt after grandma Lisa passed. Being trapped in this apartment. The loneliness of it. The lack of adventure. I make my way over to the soft, chestnut chair facing out to the brownstone buildings. We used to sit in this chair, gazing upon the seemingly endless rows of buildings, the crowded skyscrapers making the apartments feel like honeycombs in a beehive. These buildings were part of the best of his stories. Sure, the stories about Finland’s snowy Lapland or the dense jungles of Brazil were magical, but there was something special about the way he could take us back 60 years in this very city, as if his words were a time machine.

As I arrive in the 1950’s, I see the now absent New York skyline. However, not everything has changed; the apartment block looks not a day younger. The brownstones are already quite old, but more nostalgic than anything. I grab my hat as a mediocre shelter from the scorching, 90-degree heat outside and open my front door to Greenwich Village. I make my way down the stairs and out onto the pavement, where a puddle of water is forming below Frank’s ice truck parked out front. I sidestep the puddle and make my way down the street. Windows are open to let the apartments breathe, however, at this time of day, many of them are empty with their inhabitants hitting the town.

As a woman in a kitchen off in an underground loft opens up her oven, the smell of blueberry muffins floats out onto the street, and I think to myself about what it was like to be a wife back then. I’m proud of my grandma for how she thrived in her changing world. She once told me

that in the aftermath of the war, women were being encouraged to return to a domestic life. But, with a smile of pride on her face, grandma Lisa told me how she held her ground. She was smart, because she knew how to be empowered in the male-dominant world by presenting herself in a way that the media would approve of. It took Jeff a long time to realize how incredible she really was. If I asked him when he realized it, he would tell me about the time she climbed a ladder and broke into a criminal’s apartment in high heels and a dress. He would tell the story with a bubble of pride in his throat, and Lisa would smile back from across the room, joking about how she changed the most stubborn mind in the world.

My mind continues to wander into his world. As I make my way into the centre of town, the melancholy strums of Ramblin’ Jack Elliott’s guitar echo through Washington Square, a crowd of men huddled on the stairs around him. On a stone bench, a man reads a foreign newspaper, seemingly Russian, under the vigilant eye of those passing by. Signs hang over the pavement on the nearby Eighth Street, offering everything from jewellery to chow mein. As the clock hits 5, a sea of tailored suits flow out of the doorways, stepping into pristine machines that look more like rocket ships than cars. I think to myself about how taken aback these people would be if they could travel to my time. What they would think if that newspaper was about finding equality, rather than finding communists. What they would think seeing two men walk hand in hand down the street. What they would think seeing those tailored suits also worn by women, instead of mostly men.

As the sun sets, I make my way back to the apartment. Inside, Jeff is tinkering with an Exakta VX camera under the warm glow of a lamp, grumbling about his hunger. “Ready!” Lisa yells from the kitchen. Jeff makes his way through the steam and sits patiently at the kitchen table, behind him is a pile of suitcases anticipating the newlyweds’ honeymoon to the Himalayas. Outside the window, the pianist’s tune sets the tone, calm and serene. The neighbours surrounding him make the apartment block feel like a sit-com. I’ve heard a lot about all of them, from Jeff’s stories. My favourite characters would have to be Miss Torso and Mrs Thorwald, two very interesting people.

In Jeff’s stories, Miss Torso is a stunning young lady who can get all the men. Lisa would always interrupt him, arguing that she was “doing women’s hardest job, juggling wolves”. In her apartment, her husband Stanley sits at the table

with a steaming plate of potatoes as she glides elegantly through the kitchen. In Lisa's eyes, Miss Torso is working hard to take care of herself in what she knows is a difficult world.

I shift my eyes over to the vacant apartment. At this time of night, the room is a dark navy shade, with the faint moonlight outlining the walls in an otherwise hollow space. Until a couple months ago, it belonged to the Thorwald's. From what Jeff has told me, Mrs. Thorwald was everything that he didn't like about a woman. He said she was always nagging, treating her husband like a slave. When he tells the story, it almost sounds like he doesn't blame Mr. Thorwald for losing the plot; after all, this was a time where the wife was meant to take care of the husband, not the other way around. Jeff looks over to Lisa, wiping a plate clean, grateful to now know that she would never be that lazy.

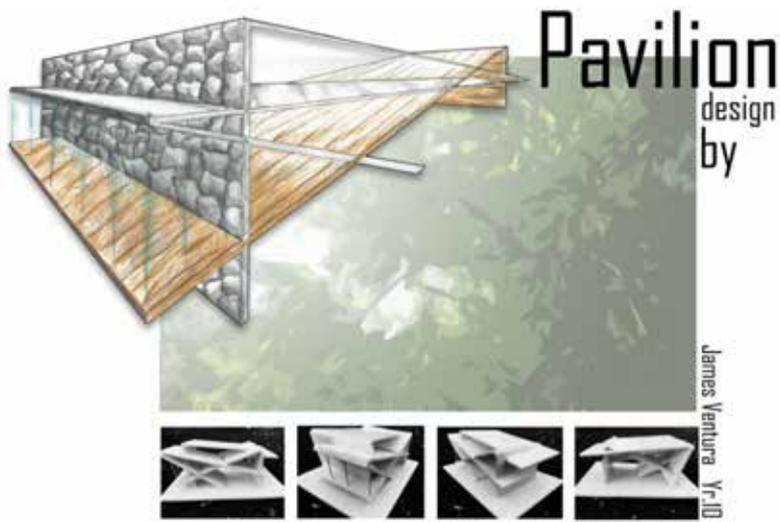
As the morning comes, Lisa emerges from the bedroom dressed in a red and white plaid top, tucked into high waisted jeans. A proud smile radiates from Jeff's face as he grabs the suitcases,

trailing behind Lisa as they walk through the door. He looks back, his eyes looking one more time through the window, all his neighbours still asleep outside.

As he twists the lock, I feel myself being brought back into the moment. The mid-July sun beams through the window, rays of sunlight trickling onto the floorboards and steaming up the room. I sit up from my chair and take off my suit, changing into something more suitable for the heat. I make my way over to the air conditioner, a luxury that Jeff wasn't as fortunate to have in his day. As I go to switch it on, I notice how all my eco-friendly neighbours still stick to an open window. After all, Greenwich Village is world-famous for its bohemian culture that suits those eco-warriors so perfectly. I consider joining the trend, but decide to stick to my privacy over the environment and listen as cool air begins to rush through the machine. The Exakta VX camera catches my eye, a shattered lens resting neatly atop the mantelpiece. It's strange knowing that it has taken its last photograph. ■



Jasmine Sear
Year 7 · Aquinas College



James Ventura
 Year 10 · Aquinas College

Pavilion Design



Kaelan Boundy
 Year 10 · Aquinas College

Pavilion Design



Sam Leonard
 Year 10 · Aquinas College

Pavilion Design



Caleb Ernstzen
Year 7 · Aquinas College



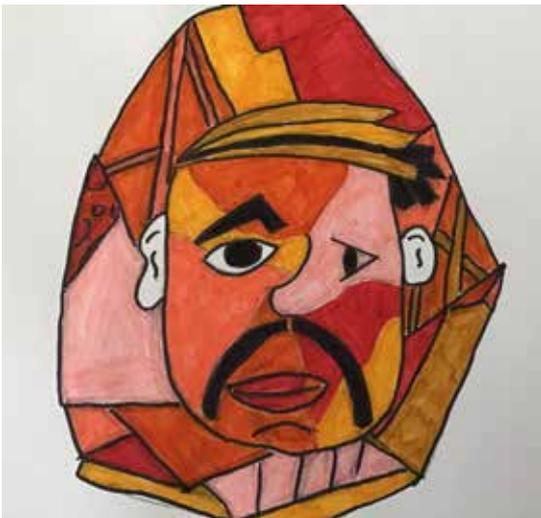
Louise Ramos
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Abstract Portrait



Chloe Chambers
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Abstract Portrait



Josh Lubbers
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Abstract Portrait



Bianca Alipan
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Abstract Portrait

A MOTHER'S CALL

Maya Cannon · Year 10 · Aquinas College

“Hello officer?” I say through the phone, faster than I expected.

“Come quickly” I let out a cry. “Someone has taken my kids.”

The sobbing starts. I’m shaking with fear and can’t stand still. I walk in endless circles around my kitchen.

“My kids are gone!!” I scream in panic and agony. “My kids are gone...”

My hand is on my heart like it’s been shattered into a million pieces.

“Someone broke into my house... they took my kids. I let out a deep breath I didn’t realise I was holding.

Stay calm, stay calm, stay calm, I repeat to myself.

“My name is Maria Nicholas and I live at 1 Oak Street in Franklin Hills.”

I try to describe them as best as possible.

“There were two men around 6 feet and a big build. They were so strong.”

I let out another cry. I sniff and continue.

“They wore ski masks over their faces and were dressed in black.”

The clock on my table reads, 11:48pm. I whisper into the phone.

“I think my ex-husband planned this. Please hurry, the door is unlocked.”

I sigh and put the phone down. Ok, much more believable that time. I dial 911 on my phone.

“Hello this is 911, what’s your emergency?”

“Hello officer? Come quickly. Someone has taken my kids.” ■

WINE GLASS

Tahlia Knight · Year 10 · Aquinas College

The deep, red liquid gushed out of the bottle like a river on a rainy day.

“Laura?” a man’s voice called, its low pitch hummed throughout the hallway.

Laura fumbled with the bottle, nearly dropping it but was lucky enough to grasp its neck in her hands. She twirled around quickly, stashing the two bottles in the safety of a drawer. Footsteps began to approach, getting louder and louder with each stride. She turned to the bench, heart pounding in her chest and snatched the glasses full of red wine in her hands. She made note of which was not like the other.

“Yes Luv?” Laura called back, as she rushed out of the kitchen into the living-room.

She approached the coffee table that stood bare in

front of the couches. Looking at her husband and smiling, she placed the wine glasses gently on the table. He grinned back, and asked her about her day.

Laura headed back towards the kitchen, saying she was going to get snacks, leaving her husband by himself. An evil, malicious grin grew upon her face. She approached the benches, and grabbed a bag of chips sitting lonely on the benchtop.

Upon her return, she gave him a forced, sarcastic smile before dropping her aching body onto the softness of the couch. She passed the chips to her husband and reached for her glass of wine. After a few sips, she noticed that the red mixture tasted bitter. Reality dawned on her, before she could rise and confront him, before she could yell and scream. She collapsed, dead.

He had swapped the glasses. ■

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED WHAT YOUR LIFE WOULD BE LIKE?

Lauren Leung · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Have you ever wondered what your life would be like? I personally have never thought about it until now. How much you value the friends you have. The special friends who get you through everything, make you want to be better. My friends (my friendship group) mean everything to me. Olivia, Aimee, Porshia and Brianna. I honestly believed my life was not going to turn out like this 2 years ago. If you had asked me “Lauren, would you imagine where you are now, with your friendship group”. I would tell you bluntly “No, I would have expected this”. It got me thinking about what would happen when I leave next year and have to say goodbye to them. Most likely feeling of dread and despair. I will miss them and all of their flaws and big, loud personalities.

Brianna. I have known her since Prep in primary school (St. Paul’s Primary School). We were best friends in primary school, both had so much in common, both not sport fans and dreaded the thought of P.E twice a week. We had our problems like all friends did back then. Then we both moved to Star 3 years ago. Well time goes by so fast. We became close, I felt that I could tell Brianna anything, and I wouldn’t have any judgement. Brianna has grown up so much and matured to the lovely friend I know today. I think I don’t know what to do without her.

Aimee. What to say about Aimee?. There is plenty to say about one of my best friends. She became my best friend last year in Year 8. She was the first friend who made me feel like I don’t have to be afraid to ask for help, and not be ashamed of struggling in learning. Aimee always has a way of making me laugh, intentional or not. When I feel sad or need cheering up she is always there. Sometimes if I want her to leave me alone, she sees right through that and still makes me laugh. For example: “I like being myself song” or trying to tell me to stop eating chocolate as it makes me really high and be on a sugar high. She’s always trying to convince me to like sport and participate in Athletics Carnival. Aimee does love her sport. She loves telling me about my huge obsession with binders and organisation. I think the thing I would miss about her is our amazing friendship. I honestly do not believe I would have completed Year 8 without her, Her funny personality, Songs

or Crazy, loud bubbly personality. I don’t care if she struggles with speaking. That’s what makes Aimee unique, different and I wouldn’t change that about her.

Olivia. What not to say about her?. She became quickly one of my best friends. She is courageous, strong, quiet and always trustworthy even if sometimes she is confused. She has the biggest heart of anyone I have ever met. She is a huge sports lover. I mean from anything from Cricket to Netball. I always found Olivia as a person who is the greatest friend. The only thing that I have learnt about her is she doesn’t like to lose friends. As she has struggled with it in the past. I have learned that people like Olivia are always there for you, and sometimes protect and shield you even if you don’t realise it at the time. She embodies truly what a friend is. It is so funny how you think that you won’t be friends with someone because of your huge personality difference. I guess that is not the case. I think the thing I carry along with me, is the true meaning of friendship and how I cannot imagine if I wasn’t friends with Olivia.

Porshia. Loud, Bubbly, Very outspoken Porshia. Even though Porshia didn’t come in until this year. I can’t imagine our friendship group without her. Sometimes Porshia can get quite loud, a bit crazy (in a good way) and constantly be on a sugar high. That’s what makes Porshia, Porshia. She is someone who I can always talk to about anything, and very trustworthy. I have learnt that no matter how many times I tell her I’m fine, she honestly sees right through them. I have learnt to accept that about her. She loves to give hugs, even though you haven’t asked for her to. I think she has been better at that lately. I will miss her crazy, outspoken sassy personality, but most important my most open friend.

I thought by writing this, that I could convince myself, why I have the friends I do. Most of the time I don’t know how I deserved my friendship group. However, I have learnt that I do deserve these friends, my friendship group. I shouldn’t feel like I don’t in any way, shape, or form. Even though I try to push them away, they always seem to come back, I have learnt to give up on trying to push them away. Everyone deserves their special group and these best friends are mine. ■

THE VOICE

Nina Browne · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

It was cold in there. Dark too.
Thoughts of freedom were hard to catch. They slipped in
and out of his mind.
'We will get out of here.' A voice whispered. 'Just hold on.'
Lights on. Blinding. He covers his eyes.
'Come one.' A gruff voice says. 'Get up.'
The blue keeper stands in front of him. Checkered uniform.
Gun and stick attached to his belt.
He stood up. Shaky but strong.
The doors were there. He pushed them open.
A wind brought the voices of his family to his ears.
And the black man finally remembered who he was. ■



Isabel MacKenzie
Year 4 · St Finbar's Primary School

Collage Flowers

CREATIVE RESPONSE - TO KILL A MOCKINGBIRD

Rosie McLaughlin · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

My creative response is about Atticus supporting Mayella and her siblings after Bob Ewell dies. It is in the form of a missing chapter.

“Atticus, are you visiting Mayella again?” Scout asked. It was a hot Friday afternoon and Scout was bored. Jem had hidden in his room as soon as school had finished, which was “all part of growin’ up” as Calpurnia put it. Atticus had come home from work early, like every Friday for the past few weeks, and was about to leave again. Scout knew he was going to visit those dirty Ewells when he grabbed his car keys.

“Yes, Scout. I will be home just after dinner.” Atticus replied.

“Why do you visit that awful girl every Friday. I thought you were s’posed to hate her anyway.”

Atticus looked at Scout with curiosity and leaned down so that his face was level with hers.

“Scout, I thought you remembered. I told you that our friends remain our friends, despite what they say-”

“Yes, but the Ewell’s were never our friends. The Ewell’s are trash.”

A single bead of sweat travelled down Atticus’ forehead. He stood up, pulled out his handkerchief, wiped his face and took Scout’s hand.

“How about you come with me?”

The Ewell’s place looked the same as before. The Chiffarobe still stood beside the house and the geraniums bloomed in the blazing summer afternoon. Scout looked out the window to the house she had seen many times before, and despite everything being placed the same, something felt different. Mayella Ewell stood by the front door, awkwardly waiting for Atticus to arrive. Her skin looked soft and pale with patches of sunburn on her cheeks from sitting in the sun too long. She had pushed back her hair into a ponytail so you could see her uneven smirk and she lay her arms by her sides, revealing her muscular build from working long days of hard labour. Like the house, Scout could tell something wasn’t the same as before. She looked... free.

“Afternoon, Miss Mayella. I hope you don’t mind, I brought my daughter Scout.”

She responded with a small nod and welcomed the

two inside. Scout looked up to her father to see if he had disapproved of her impoliteness but he walked ahead with a smile on his face.

“Okay, Miss Mayella I suggest we get started right away.”

The group sat on a small table by what seemed to be the only window in the house. Scout sat down, immediately zoning out of the conversation and looked out the window to discover Burris Ewell playing in the backyard with another little girl who looked like a girl version of Burris.

“But, Attic- Mr Finch, I have not but two, three years of schoolin’. Nobody wan’ me workin’ for ‘em in town. I’ll never get a job and the chillun’ will starve.” Mayella’s voice was shaking and Scout looked up to see if she was going to cry but Mayella took a breath and looked at Atticus.

“Mr Finch, I think you shoul’ stop helpin’ me. If the town finds out-”

“Then they find out.” Atticus looked at Mayella with sympathy but his expression quickly turned, and after years of recognising his mannerisms, Scout could tell he was determined to change the course of the conversation.

“Miss Mayella, there is a new office in town. I will put in a good word for you and you can begin working there. You may have to wipe benches, serve tea and food and clean up after everybody else but it will give you money. I also suggest you go to night school. You can get an education and get a better job with higher pay. And Miss Mayella...” He looked uncertain to finish what he had been saying.

“Yes, Mr Finch?”

“Miss Mayella, I think you should sell this house. I know you have an attachment as it belonged to your father but with the new expenses you could buy a small house in town and send the children back to school.”

“The chillu- children back to school?”

“Yes. Now, I know this might come as a surprise and I am here only to assist but your brothers and sisters need a better life. You can give that to them.” Atticus sounded as if he was pleading with Mayella as if he knew that she needed to agree with him or the Ewell family would remain the Ewell family. Scout looked to Mayella. She was staring out the window so Scout traced her eyes to

see what she was looking at. Burris was carrying around the little girl on his back and she held her stomach unable to control her fits of laughter. The children were all playing with each other and, just for a moment, looked like the happiest children in the world. Scout looked back at Mayella who had a single tear that rolled down her cheek. She leaned across the table and touched Mayella's hand who turned around and smiled.

"Ok, Mr Finch."

"I can't wait for Grade 5, Jem" Scout exclaimed.

Jem mumbled something in reply but Scout couldn't be bothered to ask, he was obviously as grumpy as usual. Summer had finished and the school year had started. Jem and Scout parted ways at the school gate and Scout went up to her classroom. Miss Stephanie Crawford stood behind her desk with the same plastered smile she had every first day of school. Scout looked across the room to see

all the familiar faces. A boy walked through the door and Scout didn't recognise him. His brown hair was neatly combed and pushed back so that his face was clear. He had freckles around his nose and large cheeks that got bigger when he smiled. The blue shirt and brown pants he wore were a little big for him but neatly ironed just the same. She walked straight up to him and smiled.

"Hi, I'm Jean Louise Finch but everyone calls me Scout. You must be new. What's your name?"

The boy stared at Scout with a puzzled look on his face. He stood in front of her with his mouth wide open as if he was going to say something, but he didn't.

"Are you ok? I was nervous for my first day too."

"Scout, it's me."

Scout looked at the boy but he remained unfamiliar.

"Burris." ■

THE BOOK

Scarlett Martiniello · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Many thoughts came to Stephanie's mind as she strutted down the true crime aisle of the school library. How was she supposed to know what the 'perfect book' was? Girls like her don't read; they sit at the back of the class and gossip. As she stroked the books' spines with her manicured nails, something caught her eye – a brown, hardcover book with a jam-like substance dripping down the side. Stephanie cautiously approached the book with a great sense of intrigue. She pulled the book from the shelf, only to realise that it wasn't jam at all. ■

MAY

Nina Rotarangi · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

May 26th, 2020

Last night an innocent man was killed by a police officer; no arrests or charges have been made.

I'm scared.

I walk outside and see many people walking around shouting and chanting. Suddenly, they stop shouting and start running. I see they're running from the police. I'm confused at first but then I see that the police are shooting people and throwing tear gas. Why would they do that? The people weren't doing anything wrong. I thought police officers took an oath to serve and protect. Who's supposed to protect us from the police? ■

THE WATERFALL

Maya Pabst · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

My withered and limp body grew strong as I dove into the natural pool. The chilled water refreshed my mind. As I ran my hands through my hair, I felt free and comfortable in my own skin. My face felt clean, but much deeper than that of a face wash. The water cleansed my soul as it trickled down the gentle stream and healed my weary face. The blossoms that had been blown from the breeze enlivened my visit, fluttering and dancing on the surface. The waterfall became a safe haven for me. This was a place that I could be alone. This was home. ■

SAFE WILLOW

Mackenzie Kelly · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Wandering down to the willow tree meant escaping the world and everything in it. It was her safe place and she knew she was alone. But what difference did that make? She was alone everywhere she went. At school, home, even walking down the street. She has no friends and no one in her family really cares about her.

She is waiting for the right moment to start finding someone to be her friend. She knows she should have done this years before but now she is ready. Ready to face the world. ■

THE GARDEN

Emma Jebb · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Jane had hired two gardeners to do up her garden and announced it was going to be a competition. The gardener who did up their half of the garden best would receive a prize. They were each assigned to half the garden and were told to never come inside or to leave their half. They arrived separately and there was a huge hedge separating them. They could not see each other and communicated by talking through the hedge. A few days into the competition the gardeners were tired of not knowing who the other gardener was, so they both quit. ■

RAINDROPS

Rosie Ley · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Pitter patter, pitter patter! The more I concentrate and focus my mind on the rain, the louder it gets. The more worked up and annoyed I get about it, the heavier the rain falls. I reach over and press the home button, illuminating my dark room and hurting my eyes. My phone reads 4.54am. With my eyes drooping, I decide to make a cup of tea and grab a blanket. Not caring about the rain, I go to sit on the roof. No cars beeping, just birds chirping as I watch the sunrise. This is nice. ■



Lilli Langendoen
Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

The Beauty Of Light

I went for the option 'Staying Positive' for the Star of the Sea photography competition. I had the idea of photographing three different lights in my home. Reason being, bulbs provide power that creates brightness – I believed that energy is basically another form of positive energy...the same as staying positive. I took this very literally and wanted to indulge in a piece with multiple effects interpreting my lighting skills. I chose to feature a set of three artworks which portray a mystical sort of feel. I love the abstract side of things because it gives your mind a chance to imagine and focus. As you can see, each light is unique in its own way, just like people, and how everyone can stay positive in different ways or expressing a different theme of positivity flowing throughout their lives. The lights represent positive energy and how if you add another pathway, things can change – relating back to Star girls and how we are open to many surreal opportunities as we grow and change.



Julia Farrar
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

Lockdown, Art and Nature

I spent some of my time in lockdown doing artwork. I enjoy depicting nature in art, especially the fruit trees outside our back door.

THANK YOU PAPPOU (GRANDAD)

Stanley Toklis · Year 7 · Whitefriars College

You must have been so scared as a small, innocent, boy. Witnessing people die on the streets where you played. Watching people's houses being burnt down to the ground and watching families cry as they are being locked away and separated from each other. Being forced to eat rotten scraps as your only source of food. Food that affected your body so badly that it nearly killed you. You had no choice, you almost died from hunger... twice!!! It disgusts me how you had to drink dirty water full of insects and bacteria and watch innocent people die every day. After all of these sacrifices and horrible situations that you went through, I would just like to say one thing.

Thank You.

Thank you for continuing with your life and trying to make it better for others. If you were to have given up on everything and died in the war I would never have learned these life lessons you taught me. I would never have learnt all those soccer skills and tactics you showed me. I would never have had a beautiful grandma cooking me delicious food and giving me hugs and kisses. I would never have had my supportive and loving parents around to keep me happy and take care of me. I would never have

had my cousins and siblings to tell jokes to and have fun and play games with.

You always believed how bright your future could be if you continued to work hard and fight. I could have never imagined how frightening it would have been for you, to come to a new country, to start a new generation just after surviving poverty and war. You left all those dark thoughts from your early years and took a chance to come to a new country and start a better life. You were determined to never stop, until you achieved what you wanted. You met new people and made new friends, you got a fantastic job in the dental industry and earned a lot of money. You met the love of your life and had two happy children. This tells me that hard work really does pay off!

Pappou, you had such an extraordinary life and had the best recovery from a very difficult beginning. You really inspire me to work hard and never let negative thoughts take over. You just haven't changed your life, but you've changed mine as well.

I'm proud to be your grandson, Pappou.

You've earned all my respect.

I will never forget your lessons... ■

RESPECT

Kaspar Nickel · Year 9 · Whitefriars College

The sun glares through a thin gap between the heavy curtains covering the windows. Knives of warm, yellow light slice into the eyes of the man sleeping there; right through his thin eyelids that are desperately trying to protect the tired eyes beneath. But the man sleeping in the bed is not the important part of this story. It is the light glancing off his face trying its very hardest to wake him from his slumber. The light that can cut the haze of sleep like butter. The light we lay our comfort and trust in. The light that always falls on the kindest face but never what is behind it. That bright facade that stops us from seeing what is behind. The light that blinds us. Light always casts a shadow, however bright the face is you see. But that is all we can see, not into the shadow behind, the shadow that defines that bright mask. We see the face of the beautiful girl that passes us on the street, or the dirty, weathered features of a homeless man on the pavement, not what hides in the darkness behind, the shadow that defines us as individuals. Hiding in the dark could be the savage wings of pain, regret and guilt, writhing in the dark. Or it could be the warm glow of the beautiful day, warming every surface. Whatever is there, that is what we need to see and recognise and respect. See through the light and through the dark, what is in shadows.

My eyes snapped open, and closed again just as fast. The sun was painfully bright. Still wondering who had left such a large gap in the curtains, I walked drowsily over to the window, and pulled aside the thick woollen curtains, letting the sunlight wash over the room, warming every surface. I looked down through the glass, over the long reaching plains of grass and trees that lounged across the earth. I waved at one of the gardeners who worked their fingers to the bone every morning to polish the dewy grass, and feed the flowers to bloom in the most beautiful shades of colour. The door creaked loudly as I pushed it open, the downside of living in such an old house. Every morning I noticed the stairs seemed to take longer and longer to get down, every step moaning louder than the last. After what seemed like an age, I made it down to the ground floor and made myself a fast breakfast; I knew I was already late for work.

Fifteen minutes later I was out the door, walking quickly through the sparkling grass towards high gates made of heavy iron, seeming to sag under their own weight. But as I walked down the road,

the rush of the morning and the fog of sleep cleared from my mind, allowing the demons of my consciousness to wake too, every step they took making cracks in my resolve. The stress of the last few months, my father's business crumbling away in my fingers, my desk that would crack under the weight of bills and paperwork, and the only person I had left, my wife leaving...

“Spare change?”

Looking around I was surprised to see a pile of rags edging towards me, grey from age and frayed from the elements. Making out dirty hair and black, deep set eyes from the mess, I ignored him.

“Oi, You there, you deaf? I see you strutting past me with your nose in the air, like the Queen of England”.

I stopped in my tracks, still facing away. I looked down in surprise to see my fist clenched, digging into the palm of my hand, fingernails cutting the skin there, making deep impressions.

“Ahhhh that got your attention dinnit? All you snobby business men always think you're the big man, still too cowardly to even look at me though...” His hand wrapped around my ankle. It all happened so fast. The creatures in my mind took one last stab, the cracks spreading across in every direction. It was too much, pain blossomed in my chest, reaching out and clasping my heart in its rough grip, and my vision faded.

I woke up to sickly bright white walls and the sound of beeping. Grey figures were rushing around through the corridor in front of me, and there was only one familiar face. The face of the homeless man. The man I had treated like nothing. He had called an ambulance for me. He had saved me. He had found it in his heart to help me. He saw past my arrogance and now he sat talking to me. He told me about how he used to be like me, with a house, with a family and job. Until everything fell apart, just like it was for me. I could see that similar things were in the shadows behind him and me. Hiding in him was the fear and the regret, just like me, and I was blinded by the wall of his appearance to see that. Now with new eyes I could see the similarities between our shadows, that respect could see through the dark, to see that everyone is the same. ■

MEMORIES UNDER A DROP SHEET

Evan O'Connor · Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Between the dying trees, overgrowing Canada thistle, and the once perfect concrete walkways, now laden with cracks and imperfections, an oversized, unattractive apartment building loomed. Despite being an eyesore to the residents of the quaint town, the grey stucco matched and blended perfectly with the cloud filled sky. On the third floor, a man gazed out of a rusting aluminium window, looking down onto the empty footpath. His eyes, although focused, lacked definition between iris and the pupil, as they blended into one colourless blob. With a long face, with smile lines signifying a life well lived, his chin rested on the palm of his wrinkled hand as he lent on his leather armchair laden with wrinkles and marks mirroring his own. Wearing a navy-blue dressing gown, flannelette pyjama bottoms and a pair of well-worn slippers, his clothing told the story of someone who had just rolled out of bed, although the sun was well on its way to set. Directly in front of his arm chair, an old plasma TV displayed the news.

For a second, he took it off mute. “Civilians ordered to stay home, inside and safe as COVID-19 cases continue to spike.”

With a heavy breath, Horace placed his head in his hands as he attempted to come to terms with what had happened. “No job, no family, no reason...” he kept on muttering to himself. Whilst he sat there, the walls of his living room began to enclose on him, surrounding him. As his breathing got faster and shallower, his thoughts began to intensify.

In an effort to escape the new reality that had become his life, Horace shuffled into what once was his spare bedroom. Leaning back on the door, he stood and attempted to relax, but the effort was in vain. In front of him lay a room, packed with boxes, dust and past memories packed away and sealed with a plethora of duct tape. This newly repurposed storage room became a hideaway place for Horace. A place where ill forgotten, unwanted past experiences and items could be pushed away, repressed, and hidden in the hopes of never having to deal with them. Now though, his past actions had caught up with him.

In the corner of this room, he stood still embracing what his life had become; a series of memories and experiences concealed between various forms of adhesive and congealed dust. In the corner of his eye, he saw a tall drop sheet, concealing a long, rectangular object. Staring and pondering, he stood still, trying to cover up his child-like wonder with his neglect for all things in the past, but eventually he gave in.

Navigating his way through the minefield of boxes, Horace took a deep breath before grasping the corner

of the drop-sheet and pulling it towards himself at great speed. Dust flew everywhere, enveloping the room in its entirety. “It’s been a long time, hasn’t it, old friend” he said as he stared with a gaze of adoration.

Sticking out like a sore thumb, the pristine mahogany wood of this upright piano gleamed and glistened as if it were brand new. Intricate wood carvings of a floral arrangement graced the edging, whilst the three gold pedals at the bottom of the piano shone like a piece of antique jewellery. The keys told a different story, with the once white ivory now looking yellow, uneven and loose. For what seemed like hours, Horace stood there, taking in this piano. From underneath the keys, Horace pulled out a mahogany bench, lined with real leather and he sat, with his head rested on the front board. Emotionlessly, music began to flood his ears, with the jubilant noise of Mozart’s Sonata No 17. A vivid memory began to fight its way into his stubborn head, overtaking him.

A stone fireplace roared as a woman, in her middle age played the piano. Next to her sat three young children on the floor, watching in adoration. The ever-happy sound of the children’s favourite piece of music flooded the room, with all but one smiling. On the piano, the mother played the semibreves, triplets, and minims with a straight face. The music paused as one of the children stood up and asked their mother a question. “Mummy, when’s daddy getting home? Hasn’t the war finished?”

She stood still and gave him a comforting smile, her mouth quivering. “Soon, my darling. Very soon” She scraped her bench along the hardwood floors causing an ear piercing shriek.

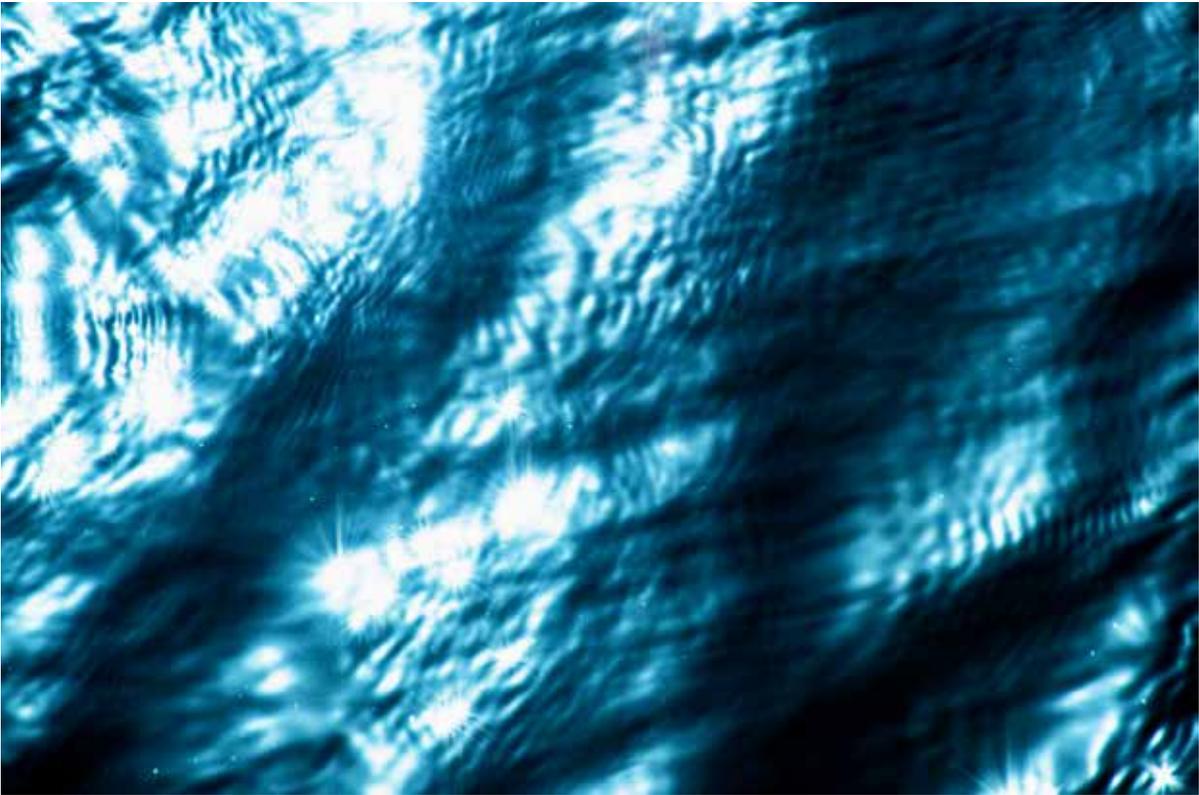
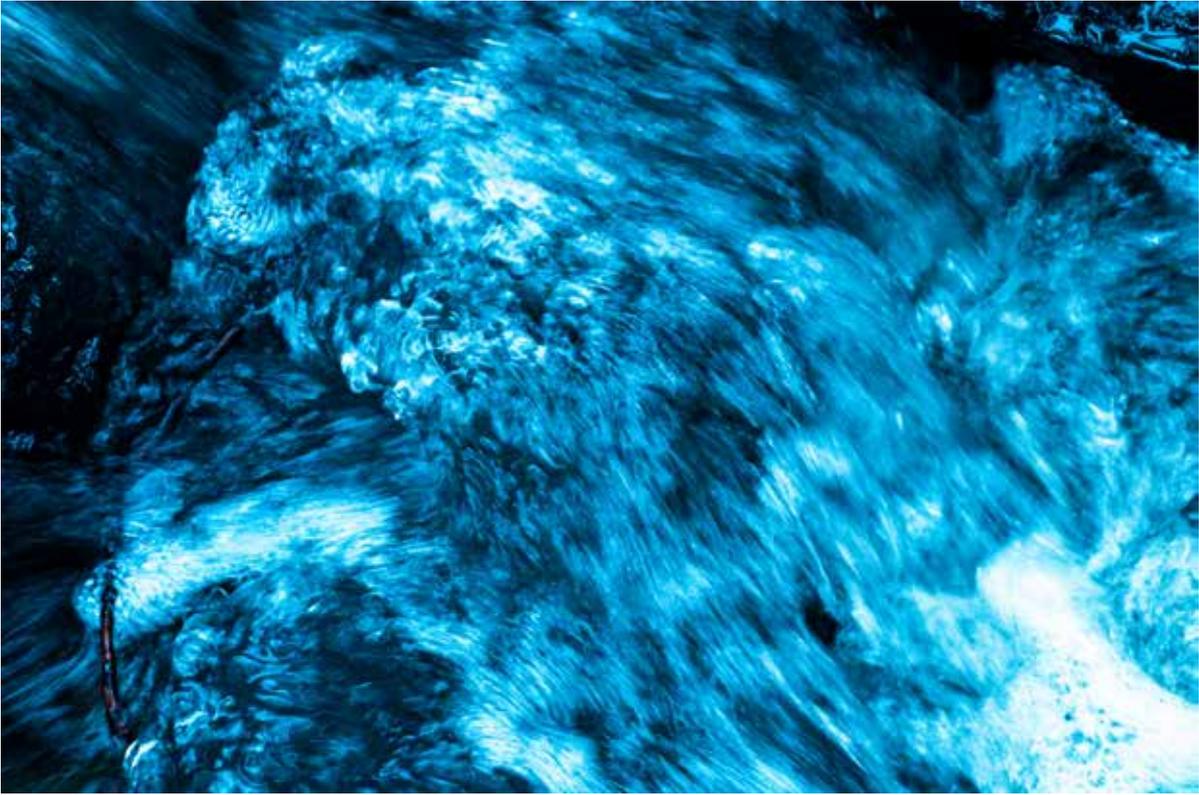
A lorry’s screeching breaks awoke Horace from his deep gaze. “How?” he kept on asking himself.

“How can somebody sacrifice her own feelings to protect others?” He sat still in reflection, still overwhelmed with the memories.

Feeling wobbly and speechless, he cleared the boxes in his way and began to drag this century old piano out of this dust filled time capsule. Pushing it with all his might, he placed it right in the middle of his living room. He scooted past his arm chair and opened the door to his balcony and felt a whoosh of wind, waking and exciting. He brought the bench in, sat down again, and began to play Mozart’s Sonata No 17. Suddenly, the walls that once felt so enclosing opened, and the TV that struck fear, was drowned out by the noise of arpeggios over a major chord.

“That woman” he muttered to himself.

“If she can live a life like hers whilst still smiling, what excuse do I have?” ■



Max Tyler
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Ephemeral Flow 1 & 2

HURRAY

Joshua Wilton · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Our doctors work hard dusk to dawn
To save the lives of women, children and men
We all share the same atmosphere
So join together for the sake of our world

Hurray to our doctors
Hurray to our nurses

Our leaders lead through thick and thin
Calm and collected to the storm of a need
And as composed as a mantis
So we thank them for their selflessness and work

Hurray to our leaders
Hurray to our captains

Shops close but passions are explored
Our values instilled before money or work
For the conservation of life
Is more important than all material

Hurray to our morals
Hurray to our views

Mateship embedded as Aussies
Our community works humbly together
We stand side by side back to back
Eager to embrace a new way of a life

Hurray to our companionship
Hurray to our culture

We stay inside to save our lives
But learn new ways and discover new passions
For isolation is not bad
But a utopia in a dystopia

Hurray to isolation
Hurray to social distancing

Although the light may seem distant
If we work together it will come by soon
So if we lift each other up
A better place may come out of something gloom

Hurray to working together
Hurray to a better place ■

THE LAST PIECE

Nickolas Lianos · Year 9 · Mazenod College

“Thank you Yiayia your food was very nice”, I quietly snuck away from the dinner table without finishing my meal. I knew my Yiayia would not be happy. My Yiayia hated it when I did not finish my food even if it was the tiniest bit left on the plate.

“Nickolas come back please”. With a look of frustration I walked back to the kitchen table.

“Yiayia why do you always make me eat all the food you make for me”, I questioned.

“It is not good to waste food”, said my Yiayia

“But I am too full”. My Yiayia asked me to sit down and she proceeded to tell me a story which I think is worth telling. However, I will need to tell you the story in my words as the story was told to me in Greek.

When my Yiayia was a young child she grew up in a small village in Greece. It was a very tough time for her since it was around the time of World War 2. Some of her earliest memories were of her parents struggling to bring food on the table and some days she would starve a bit. My Yiayia was the youngest of four children, she had two brothers and one sister. World War 2 was a tough time for many families across the world. My Yiayia only has very few memories of her father and one of these memories was when the Italian soldiers arrived and were meant to be fighting against Greece at the time. When they came to her village the Italian soldiers did the very opposite to what they were meant to do. Instead of fighting they were welcomed by my Yiayia’s father to have a drink. Those Italian soldiers did not harm anyone that day at the village where my Yiayia lived. Later on in the war something very tragic happened which affected my Yiayia and her family forever.

One night my Yiayia’s father drove to the nearest city to the village which was Kalamata. He went to visit a close friend in the hospital. Whilst waiting for her father she happily played in the front garden while keeping a constant lookout for his return. Soon the day darkened and there was still no sign of him. Her mum reassured her that he may have had to stay the night as it was a long trip back to their remote village.

When she woke up the next morning she leapt out of bed and headed straight to the local village coffee shop where he gathered with the other men of the village. To her surprise he was nowhere to be seen. She wandered around the village and looked in all the places where he may have been. To her disappointment he was not there. With

tears streaming down her face she walked home but still held onto hope of his arrival. She played and she played and waited and waited. Darkness fell day after day, week after week with no sign of her father.

Times really began to get tough for her and her family. With her father not being there, her family did not have any source of income. She had experienced hunger at the beginning of the war but now without any money this hunger was at a different level. Every bite of food counted, especially the last bite. My Yiayia called this last bite her ‘Dynamitsa’, which means ‘power’ in English. She believed that eating this last bit of food gave her the strength she needed for the day. She relied on the kindness of her relatives and of the small village community to support her family through this tough time.

At this point of the story my Yiayia took a big pause and sighed.

I was also overcome by sadness at the thought of her having this experience as a young child. I could not imagine what it must have felt like.

“But Yiayia, did you ever find out what happened to your father?”

“Wait a moment”, she whispered and she carefully left her chair and slowly walked to her room. She came back, sat on the kitchen chair and placed some paperwork before me.

“What is this Yiayia?”

“Have a look and read to me what it says”

As I unfolded the paper I could see faded writing which looked very old. My eyes immediately scanned to the top that was dated 1944 with a long list of names. As I looked down the list of names my great grandfather’s name popped out at me. I quietly read aloud ‘Name: Ilias Polichronopoulos, height 165cm, weight 58kg, location Auschwitz, date of death...’, at that point I stopped not believing what I had just read. My great grandfather had been taken to a concentration camp in Poland. With tears in her eyes my Yiayia then explained to me that she never knew what happened and why he was taken.

At this stage I was overcome with a feeling of sadness and respect.

“Yiayia I am sorry for not understanding why eating my ‘dynamitsa’ was so important to you.”

She then gave me a big hug. ■

OUR WORLD

Jared Wigley · Year 9 · Mazenod College

Our Earth is dying
We need to protect the world
The fires are raging in the bush
We need to stop them
Our animal friends are dying
We need to save them.

The Coronavirus is ravaging the world
We need to cure it
The nurses are doctors are working hard
We need to respect them

The economy is collapsing
We need to save it.

The cities in America are falling apart
We need to fix these issues
The people are protesting each other
We need to help them
The issue is centuries old
We need to deal with them.

If we don't respect;
The world will fail. ■



Tamzin Dennis
Year 8 · Aquinas College

THE MOST IMPORTANT PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY

Ethan Tiet · Year 9 · Mazenod College

“*T*eaching is not a lost art, but the regard for it is a lost tradition.” Historian Jacques Barzun’s message suggests that we should, like many cultures did in the past, respect and idolise teachers.

Our modern world does not hold teachers in high regard when in actuality they play the most important role in our society. They truly are the foundation of all great things in our world. Those who choose to take on this role share with us knowledge which is one of the greatest gifts that we can receive. It enables children and students to develop as functioning members of society.

Learning is an important part of who we are and who we aspire to be and it is only possible with someone to teach or guide us. My love of learning first developed when I first started primary school. My Prep teacher was a great inspiration to me as she always seemed to be in a good mood. Her joy was infectious and caused her students to be happy. This made classes really enjoyable and helped me grow as a person to appreciate school and my teachers.

Teaching is about guiding someone towards a goal and helping someone to succeed in what they wish to pursue. This is why we need to respect all of our mentors; as teachers and as people. Many students and parents dismiss the fact that classroom teachers put hours of effort in daily to provide a safe and suitable learning environment for students. If we did not have teachers, the world would be vastly underdeveloped and we as a society would not have progressed as far as we have.

The twelve years of schooling that we are put through, although it may seem tormenting to some at the time, results in intelligent and functional adults. Highly respected people in our society such as scientists, doctors, lawyers etc. only came to fulfil those roles because of their teachers and mentors in the past. An individual’s achievements can be traced back to a person who has guided them.

In showing respect, we should do more than just listen in class. We need to exhibit the willingness to learn, engage actively in lessons, push ourselves further, ask for mentorship when we need it and appreciate everything that teachers do for us. Good teachers will take time out of their day, even when they are not at school, to produce lesson plans, grade homework and tests, compile notes and even sometimes tutoring or assisting a student outside of class. They set a positive example for children, giving advice and guidance. Each one encourages us to do well, not just academically, but in all fields.

I also believe that teachers deserve a higher salary so that high achievers in school will consider teaching as a career. Teaching is the key to student performance. Therefore, high achievers as teachers, guiding people into the world, we will progress further as a society.

Respect is important towards teachers because they work hard and sacrifice a lot to fulfil this duty. Everyone, especially students, should share our gratitude for teachers and inspire more students in the future to want to pursue this especially important role in our society. ■

BIO POEM

Emmanuel Madut · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Emmanuel Madut,
Funny, Happy, Tall,
Lover of *Totally Accurate Battle Simulator*,
Who is able to do amazing bottle flips,
Who feels happy – most of the time,
Who wonders about space travel,
Who has a fear of heights,
Who cares about his family more than anything else,
Who dreams of getting *Totally Tank Simulator*. ■

BIO POEM

Emmy Philemona · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Emmy Philemona,
Thankful, tall and humorous,
Who loves to play video games,
basketball and watch anime,
Who is able to watch anime all week and forget to go to school in the morning,
Who feels tired, curious and sometimes anxious,
Who wonders if he will get better in school,
Who fears giant spiders, snakes and Fortnite taking over his brothers brain,
Who cares about his family and his friends,
Who dreams of having a good job and good life. ■

MEMORIES

Joshua Tran · Year 8 · *Simonds Catholic College*

Our ships neared the coast. Everyone looked inanimate – eyes full of dread, with dark circles under them and straight lips. No one talked for a while, so I always went outside. The moon illuminated around the thick forest, keeping hidden of what would lie in those trees. There was no turning back, so I prayed to God, though I was an atheist. We were about to enter what was like a wild jungle, so I cocked my rifle ready.

There was no charging ahead. Instead we laid flat down, enough to breathe in the dirt. Three km past the barbed wire of our trenches were overwhelming enemy machines. The sky was pitch black, but full of Hell's flames when the bombardment of artillery came. Every shot pierced my ears and caused the whole ground to tremble. We were the ants, and they were the boots. It looked like the forests and houses were getting ripped by tornadoes. It was an eternity screaming and covering our bloody ears.

Desperately, the man caught in the blast crawled

to me. My eyes followed the blood trail that came from his thigh, and then spotted the severed part of his leg smashed under a rock. Gruesome as it was, my attention averted to the German troops, their crunching of the gravel growing louder. His bloodied face and white eyes looked as though they said, "You're not helping me, are you?" He was right. I just ran without doing anything. I didn't know what to do or what to think. The distant scream that ended with a single gunshot haunted me.

Through the clouds, the sun beamed faintly, radiating an unsettling warmth. There was an eerie silence from the abrupt cease of fire, making me regain sanity. Gunpowder and blood wisped in the air. I peeked through the gaps of the wire and saw the trees melted like plastic to the ground. No sign of houses, no strand of grass. Rocks turned to powder, and mountains were level with trenches. To be able to turn such a landscape into a desert made my neck flinch. ■

A SHIMMER OF JOY

Oliver Beaumont · Year 9 · *Simonds Catholic College*

In the forest the sun was releasing a calm glow on the treetops, while they bent low to listen to the river's song. The peaceful water was disturbed by a young boy. He was exploring the hard surface of a tree trunk, while pushing through the branches like gates. Excitingly, the playful boy began to splash around in the water like a puppy. He came out to dry off with a shimmer of joy in his eyes.

Lumbering on, the peaceful day was coming to an end. The boy explored the aromas of flora and fauna around him. Laughing passionately, he began his journey home, bouncing over the rocks and stopping only to scoop a hypnotising taste of fresh water into his mouth. The oasis was a gentle reminder to the boy, to all of us, to stop and appreciate the abundance of blessings around us. ■

AN ALCOHOLIC DAD

Trent Bright · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

I was furious,
All I could feel was a burning hatred
For the kid.
But then it set in,
I didn't know whether to be jumping with joy,
Or fall to my knees dramatically and cry
A part of me wanted to laugh like a madman.
"Behold,
for your son has abandoned you"
"May your days be spent lonely and with no one"
That thought replaced joy with a sense of failure.
16 years,
I was with that boy.
I must have done a pretty crap job,
If one day, he just leaves it all.
I must have been no more than
A deadbeat to him.

Just an abusive deadbeat.
I was considered an alcoholic father after all,
But I wasn't really an alcoholic
father.
I was just an alcoholic
Who couldn't even put enough effort in to be
sober,
For a science show,
Or a soccer match,
Or just one damn day.
There is no such thing as an alcoholic father,
Because a father,
puts enough effort in so his kid don't just pick up
and leave,
After 16 years.
I'm not an alcoholic father,
I'm just an
Alcoholic. ■

MY FAVOURITE BOOK CHARACTER

Tomas Gebrehiwot · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Anders,
Quiet, caring and brave,
Lover of quietness, his lazy cat and his loud town,
Who is able to shapeshift into a wolf,
Who feels scared for his sister in a completely
different world,
Who wonders why he cannot make ice-spears like
the other wolves,
Who fears that if the academy finds out his sister is a
dragon, they will hunt her down,
Who cares about the new friends he made and the
sister he needs to find,
Who dreams of re-uniting with his sister and ending
the war between wolves and dragons for good. ■

EVERY EXPERIENCE

Truman Lui · Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

The noise sent shivers down his spine. The sky was getting murkier by the second as the young soldier ran for his life. As he dashed away from the incoming bullets, he gave a quick glance to Jane, his friend, who had pretended to be a boy in order to enter the army. She was stumbling past the spiralling sniper shots with her face screaming in fear. The young soldier leapt behind a rock to gain cover, but unfortunately cut his skin on a sharp point. He let out a silent scream of pain and wiped the blood off, which was oozing out of the wound, with a dirty cloth he had in his pocket.

The enemies were tall giants who were demolishing anything coming their way as they charged forward. The young soldier could feel their wrath going through his body as he looked

at them. Without thinking, he pulled his handgun out and started firing shots. None of the bullets landed and the foes kept marching forward like mad protestors. He realised that his team might be fighting a lost battle, as one by one his allies fell like flies. The young soldier grabbed Jane and with a silent look they both knew it was time to retreat. He could taste his sweat mixed with dirt as the rain poured down from the heavens. It was a sickening taste but helped take his mind off the current situation.

Crouching low in a hidden safety net, the comrades let out a defeated sigh. The sun sheepishly peeked through the smoke and clouds, giving the two brave soldiers a warm, gentle hug. ■

SHORE RESERVE

Massimo Iannuzzi · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

I hop on my bike,
ride down Reynard Street
and turn into Shore Reserve.
I drop my phone
keys
next to the goalpost
and cover them with a bag.
Pick up the footy,
kick it 45m ahead of me,
chase it quicker than the speed of light.
I've escaped from all of the world's
dramas,
truths,
I'm in my own world,

I feel free,
Free
to do anything people told me I couldn't do,
free to breathe nature's air,
free to truly live.
I'm at my happiest at Shore Reserve,
like a kid in a candy store,
spoilt with everything he loves.
I can't think of myself happier elsewhere,
as Shore Reserve is the sunshine that makes me
get up everyday.
I can stay here forever,
I can truly feel joyful here forever,
I can be myself at Shore Reserve,
forever. ■

MEMORY POEM - THE CRUISE

Patrick Phan · Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

I remember the time I embarked on a cruise,
As clear and bright as day,
All the luxuries, thrill and excitement.

The salty scent of the sea,
And the fragrant aroma of pasta,
Inviting me to dig in.

The fizziness of mocktails
Dancing on the roof of my mouth
Like a cascade of blunt needles.

The sweet sensation of strawberry shortcake
The fiery spicy noodles,
Which melted off my tongue.

The dancers sparkled brilliantly,
They were gleaming pearls in the darkness
As the spotlight chased after them.

The singers' voices were like thunder
Which reverberated throughout the theatre
Their voices so powerful, you could hear it
through the thickest walls.

I miss the feeling of a cruise,
The freedom to explore and indulge yourself,
And forget about all other things. ■



Alisdair Nolan
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

WAR POEM

Xavier Morrell · Year 8 · CBC St Kilda

They lied
I remember the train platform
Before we went to hell
We were shiny,
Dazzling,
Naïve.

So, we went to war.
We laughed, we smiled,
We fought
We screamed.

In a day,
Shiny metal became red rust
Perfect patriots became
Rotting corpses.

Our cosy homes
With a perfect life
Were the shells that we hid in
While shells rained
And we thought we could
“Win”

We were snappy, perfect men
Brothers
Fighting for our freedom
Doing our duty-

We never had a chance. ■

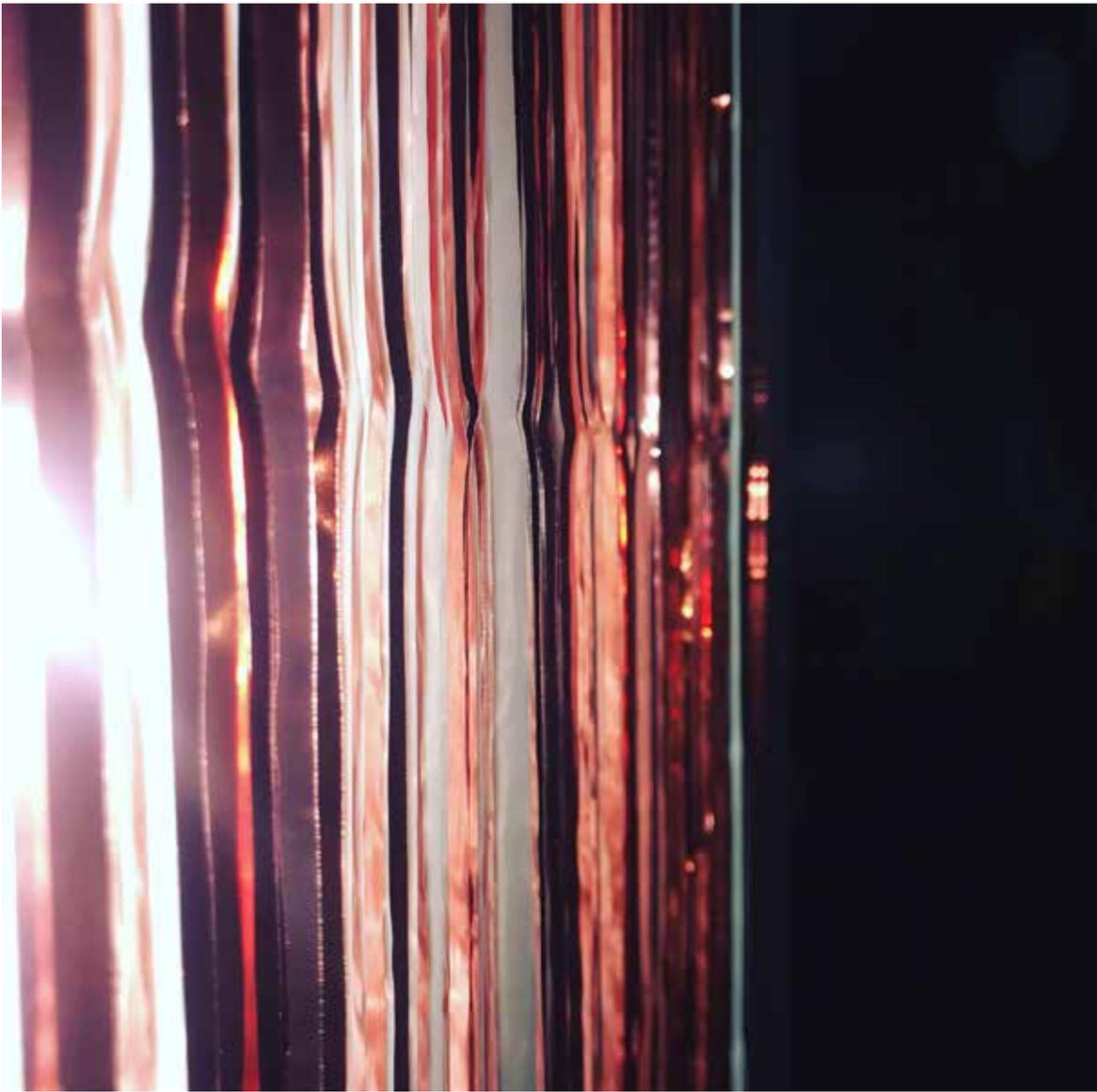


Alisdair Nolan
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

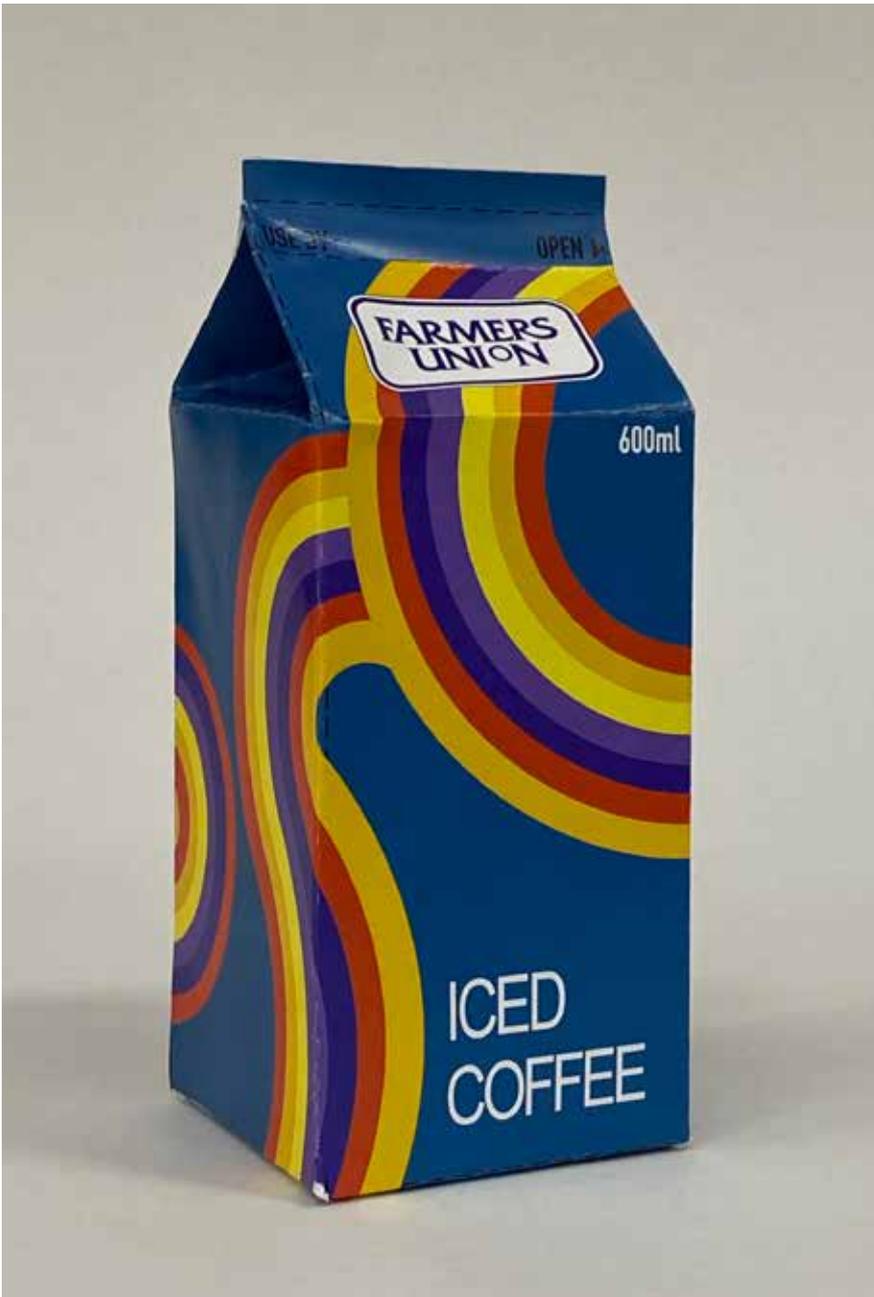


Louis Perez
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

Rest in the Past

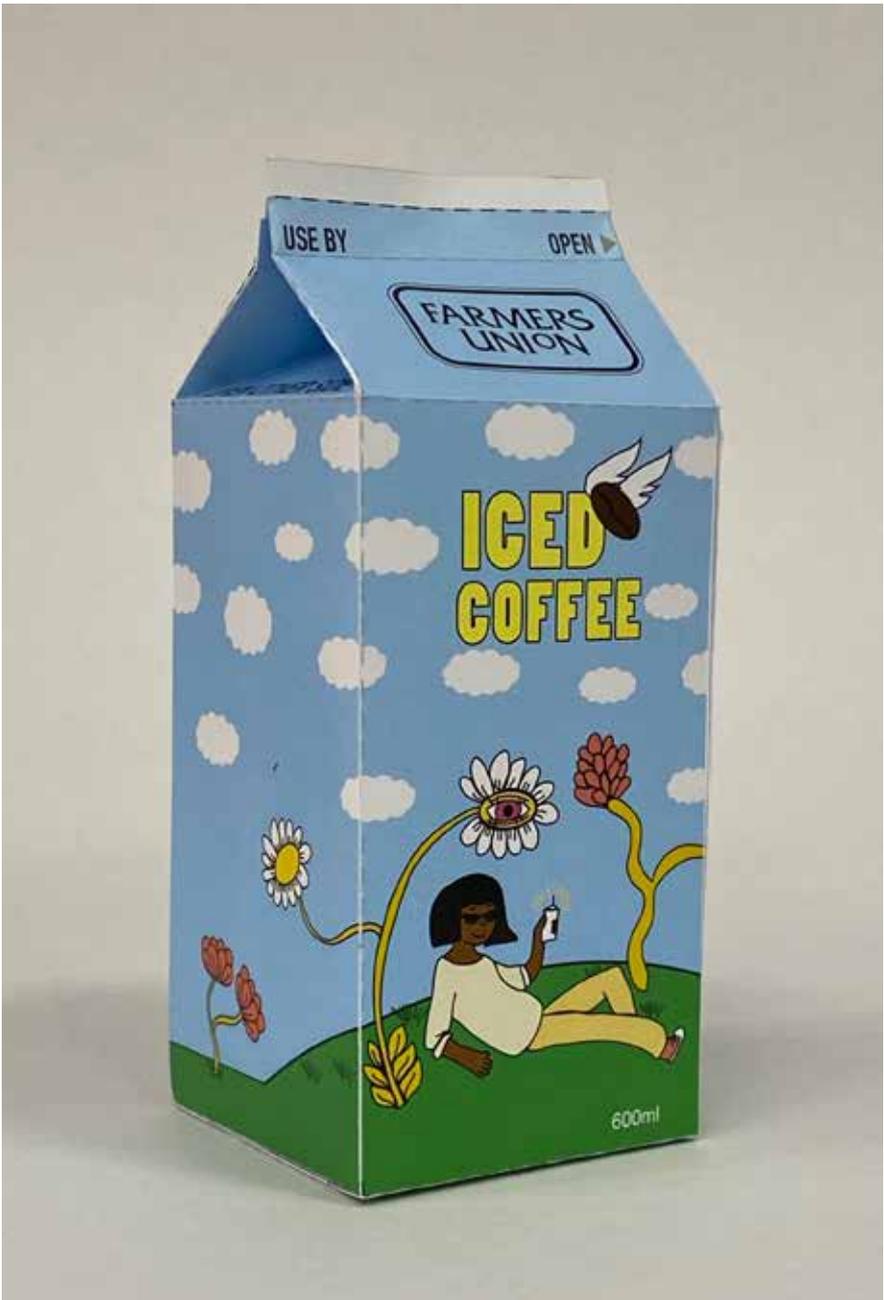


Levi Faehrmann
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda



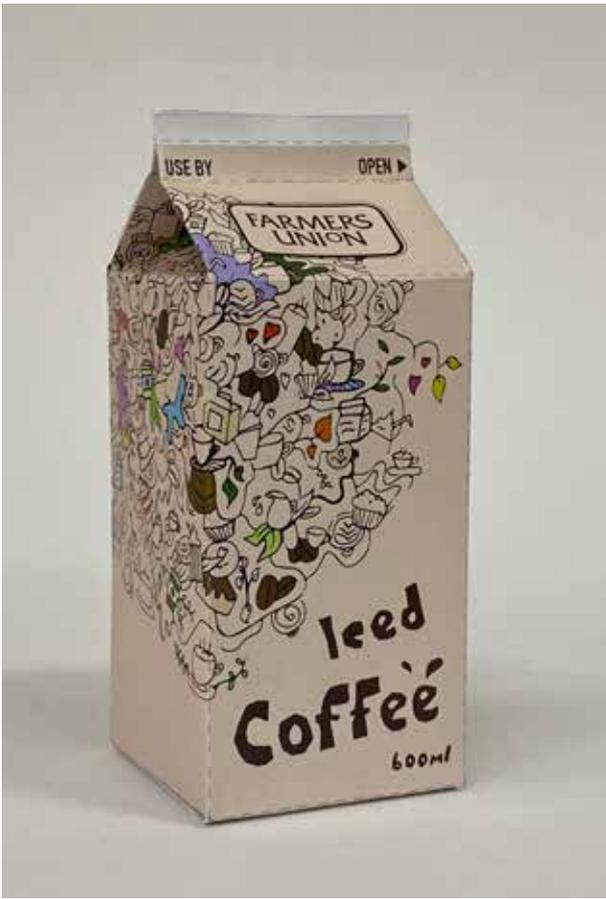
Tess Townsend
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

Visual Communication Design



Phoebe Laukens
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

Visual Communication Design



Isabella Napolitano
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

Visual Communication Design



Gracie Angus
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

Visual Communication Design



Phillip Deane
Year 8 · Whitefriars College

Gum Trees and Wattles

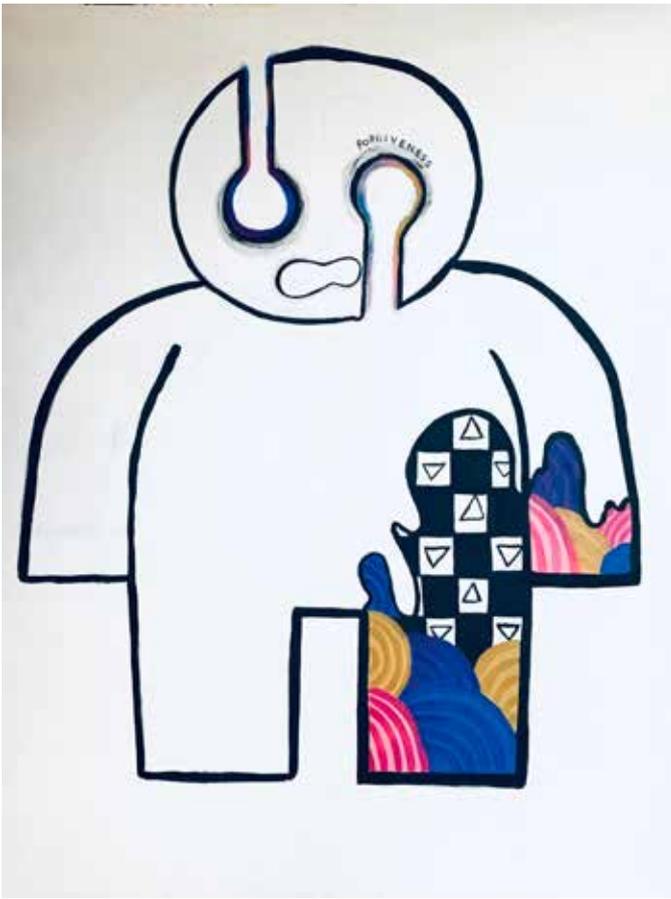
Acrylic paint on canvas.

The COVID-19 regulations and lockdown really gave me a new-found respect for the environment. Our beautiful environment and the nature around us have always been with us, but at times forgotten. During the lockdown, nature and the outdoors have proven to be one of the few joys and breaths of fresh air in our restricted lives. Going on my runs and family walks through the park have really kept me together and have opened my eyes to the relief that nature offers. The strong trunks of the gums and the sweet scent of the wattle have always stood firm; we too can find our resilience and respect.



Jade Fisher
Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

Nostalgic Childhood



Art Ministry Class Collaboration
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Stations of the Cross – Forgiveness



Art Ministry Class Collaboration
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Stations of the Cross – Greed



Clarissa Tausa
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Julian Maliyadeva
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

STARSTRUCK

Latesha Franks · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

Now moving on to Saturn, most famously known for its beautiful rings, the monotone voice droned through the TV. The boy's blue eyes were stuck to the screen, but they glistened with discovery and mystery. He didn't flinch to any noise, any loud screams or cries and he especially didn't flinch when the nurse came in.

The boy was sitting down in a coral sofa chair in the waiting room. Next to him was his mum holding his hand excruciatingly tightly. The walls were a dim grey and had bright and vibrant polka dots splattered everywhere. There was a spot in the corner filled with small children chewing on toys and crawling around. The room was quite large and semi-crowded, but the boy didn't notice. His eyes were still fixated on the TV screen. A large rainbow bent around the TV on the walls. The carpet was a mix of dark greys and dark red checkers. On another wall was drawings and notes kids left when they were... finished.

"Mr and Mrs. Armstrong," the nurse called as she walked into the room. "They're ready for you."

"Come on, Mason, it's time to go in," the boy's mum said in a sweet voice.

For the first time in the whole hour that they had been waiting, he looked away from the screen and the glistening in his eyes before, dimmed away. "Okay, Mummy," he said and smiled.

As they walked through the long corridor there was so much to look at. This place was deceiving. So many doors leading to so many rooms. When they were walking they could hear the doctors talking through the walls. Now instead of carpet, the ground became tiles. White polished tiles. When they reached a new room at the end of the corridor there was a fountain.

The boy went into a room and climbed up onto the hospital bed. He was scanning the room and was terrified. There was no TV, no bright colour, or any toys.

A man wearing a white trench coat walked into the room. He glanced at the nurse and she left the room for a moment. The man had thick black glasses, a brown spiky beard and gelled back brown hair. He was carrying a clipboard and while he was walking in he kept flicking from page to page.

The man bent down to the boy and said, "Hey buddy, I know this all looks scary, but I promise everything is going to be okay."

The man straightened up and walked over to his mum. They began to whisper but the boy tried his best to listen. "Ma'am, I'm so sorry your son has to experience this, and at eight years old! Chemotherapy will be tough, but I can assure you that if you do all the tips we give you, he will soldier through this."

The tears in the boys' eyes started to fall, harder and harder as they kept speaking. He was at the point where he couldn't stay silent anymore. "Mum-mm?" he cried. "Why isn't there any TV?"

The room went silent and all you could hear were sniffles and the boy wiping the tears away. The boys' mum sat on the bed next to him while the nurse returned. "It's okay, we can think of something! Why don't you watch my phone or play on the iPad? I should have brought them in with me... shoot! I left them in the car. Do you want me to go and get them?" she asked while looking concerned.

He silently nodded and when she left the room the nurse started turning on all the machines and connecting tubes. "Do you want to be a big boy and let me use the needle before mum comes back?"

He didn't budge. The doctor looked down at the boy's shirt. His shirt had thousands of stars and the iconic NASA logo. The doctor smiled and bent down. "I see you like space, young man. Can I tell you a cool fact?"

The boy smiled and nodded.

"Did you know that we are made out of the same things stars are made out of? Nitrogen, calcium, iron and carbon are inside of us. You are seriously a little star!"

The boy's face glowed. His smile grew ear to ear, and you could see how excited he became. "Stars aren't afraid of needles!" the boy yelled in a superhero voice and showed a toothy smile.

The mother walked back through the door to see that the little boy was already hooked up and smiling. A silent tear fell down her cheek as she turned to the doctor and smiled. "Thank you." ■

FIRE OVER THE HILL

Hamish Scanlon · Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

This Summer was tough. Tougher than all that I can remember, even my Pa says he's never seen anything like it. It all began on a fine summer's morning. I had packed my bags ready for a long trip to my grandparents' farm. They live in Batemans Bay which is an eight and a half hour trip from Melbourne. My parents were going to drop me off on the way to Sydney for work. I love going up to the farm. I get to ride the horses and motorbikes and feed the pigs and sheep. My cousins were already there helping Nan and Pa run the farm. We left early on Monday morning at about five. The sun's rays were just beginning to lighten the sky. We had only been on the road for an hour and a half before I fell asleep. When I woke up we were only three hours away and I was super excited. The countryside looked stunning, glistening in the sunlight, with the branches swaying freely in the breeze.

A couple of hours later we pulled into the long gravel driveway. The crunching of the gravel under the car had obviously alerted Nan, Pa and my cousins of our arrival as they came bursting out of the large farmhouse. We said hello and started to head inside for lunch. I walked over to the boot of the car to get my bags and I was greeted by my four cousins Jack, Lucas, William and Noah. Jack and Lucas are twins and they are fourteen. William is seventeen, and as he likes to point out is nearly an adult, and finally Noah is twelve, the same age as me. Noah and I get on really well. We're always outside mucking around together on the motorbikes or playing with the animals. Jack and Lucas are always getting into trouble and love nothing more than annoying William with their prank collection. William can't wait until he is old enough to leave home and become some sort of politician with a title that is as long as supercalifragilisticexpialidocious seven times in a row. Jack and Lucas were getting my bags out of the car and taking them towards the house with William shouting at Lucas not to walk along the freshly cut grass that he had obviously cut this morning. Noah and I got the last of my things out of the car and we dumped it all in our room. We sat down for lunch and enjoyed some delicious sausages with a salad that was barely touched.

After lunch I waved my parents goodbye and we went to feed the horses. I got some hay from the shed and stuck my arm through the fence waiting for one to approach. A medium sized horse trotted over and began to nibble on the hay. He had a lovely brown coat with a bright blonde crest and tail. As the light began to fade, we headed back to the farmhouse for dinner. Nan had cooked a

delicious roast chicken and we tucked in. After dinner we were all so full and sleepy that we went straight to bed.

The next few days were great. On Tuesday we rode the motorbikes around the farm and attempted to round the sheep into a paddock. A few got away and we had a hard time getting them back. We did a bit of racing on the forest track that we made a few summers ago, and Jack and Lucas kept nearly running into me and Noah. On Wednesday we rode the horses and took them up to the river for a swim. The water was freezing, and Noah was first in and first out. I rode the horse that I had fed on Monday and he was fast, we raced back to the farmhouse and I won by a few minutes! Thursday and Friday weren't as exciting but still enjoyable as it was too hot to go outside. We played some board games and helped Pa fix a few tractors. On Saturday we spent the morning building a new jump for the bikes and motorbikes and after lunch we tested it out. After a long day's work we were all pretty tired. Nan cooked a delicious salmon and rice with a bowl of salad that was still reasonably full at the end of the meal, despite William telling us that we must eat our salad because it will make us healthy and strong. After dinner we played UNO but I only lasted half an hour before I went to bed.

I was having a great dream about my week on the farm and what I was going to do next when the sound of a car's horn interrupted me, or at least that's what I thought it was. The car kept beeping its horn getting louder and louder and then as my eyes began to open. I saw a giant wall of red, orange and yellow thundering towards me. Suddenly I was wide awake staring out of the window in amazement. A bright wall of fire was racing over the hill and towards the house. I recognised that the horn was the fire alarms and sirens from all the houses and fire trucks nearby. I shook Noah as hard as I could and told him to get up and dress quickly. Nan and Pa came storming into the room, their faces panic stricken. Pa told us to head towards the water as fast as we could. Jack, Lucas and William tore out of their rooms ready and covering our mouths we headed outside. I caught a glimpse of the time on the grandfather clock in the hallway which said five thirty. Nan said we should let the animals out. We sprinted to the paddocks and opened the gate. Pa had loaded the car with all the important things such as documents for insurance, jewellery, photos and a few other things but there wasn't room for all of us. Pa said that William, Nan, Jack and Lucas should go in the car and we would ride the motorbikes. As Nan and the

others headed off, we rushed to put on our gear. We started the motorbikes and were just going when Noah asked what about Pa? He told us that he was going to stay until the last minute so he could get all the animals out and try to protect the house. The fire was coming closer and closer. The noise was louder than anything I've heard before. It sounded like thunder and was as loud as three Boeing 747s. The smoke had turned the sky pitch black with a tint of orange. And the only light was the glow from the flames. It was becoming hard to breathe and Pa was shouting at us to GO!

We roared off into the distance praying that he would make it out fine. After ten minutes we had made it down to the beach where the rest of the town was gathered waiting with fright all over their faces. We waited ten minutes for any sign off Pa but we couldn't see him. The fire was closing in now, the smoke circling. Nan was beginning to fear the worst when a thundering of hooves came hurtling down the road. There, beaming with pride, was Pa leading twenty horses down the road to the beach. He stopped right next to us and jumped off his horse giving us all a big hug. Then came the loudest whip off thunder and a giant fork of lightning came shooting down from the sky. The wind picked up and suddenly the fire had changed direction heading away from all the houses and all of us on the beach. I felt a drop of water hit my cheek and then another and another and before I knew it, it was pouring with rain. We couldn't believe it, only a few hours ago, a major fire started and now it was pouring with rain! The fire wasn't finished yet and lasted a few more weeks devastating other parts of the state and country. Luckily our farm wasn't hit too badly but I will always remember the picture in my mind of the fire coming over the hill. ■

SMOKE

Gabe Nonis Dalton · Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

I wake up to the smell of smoke burning the inside of my nostrils. I sit up and try to look around but all I see is the blank grey smoke swirling around me. I attempt to stand up, I inhale the smoke and the deep pain in my lungs pushes me back to my bed. I am now awake and taking in what's happening around me. A sense of panic comes over me as the reality of my situation sets in.

I jump up out of my bed to alert my family. As I am running up the dark oak hallway, I see the bright orange flames illuminated on the wall next to the oven. I suddenly realise it must have been left on during the night! I turn around the corner and enter the kitchen and am speechless as I see the oven ignited in flames. The crackling fire has mesmerised my gaze and I can't stop looking at it, I am stunned in place. Helpless. I run through the flames holding my breath trying to escape and get to my parents' room before it is too late. I burst through the door and scream for them to get out of the house.

I eventually make it to my room and can barely breathe. I look inside my room and luckily it hasn't been hit by the fire yet. I grab all of the belongings I can carry and run urgently downstairs. The fire is spreading and by now it has covered the living room in flames and is unleashing an orange haze inside the house. The house is becoming engulfed in the bright flames and I'm aware time is not in our favour. I sense that it is my last opportunity and I run for the front door. As I turn around to look at the door, there is a wall of flames guarding the exit. I turn around assessing my options, but the fire is closing in.

I can barely breathe with the mix of smoke and ash inside my lungs. I look outside and see my mum screaming for me to get out and I realize that I have to take a leap of faith and run through the

fire. I sprint straight at the door trying to block out the pain of the burning gashes the fire is creating on my legs and arms. I'm running and everything feels surreal, I can't hear anything or feel anything but the crackling of fire and the harsh sound of the flames bouncing around in my head. I can hear the screams as well, as if they are haunting me. At this point, I think I am dying and feel that this must have been the transition into heaven or wherever I was going. Then darkness. Nothing but a dark void that looked like it went on for an eternity. No pain. No screams. Nothing.

I wake up to bright lights burning my eyes. I look around and I'm in a white room with a white gown on, and the smell of chemicals fills up my nose. Suddenly the light moves closer to me and a man's head appears. I try to sit up, but the man tells me to stay lying down. I move my head around to try to figure out where I am. I look left, then right and finally down to see gashes on my legs from the fire. So, I'm not dead I tell myself, as if the pain across my whole body did not indicate so.

After lying in my bed for a while the same man I saw earlier comes in and tells me that considering I nearly died in a fire I look ok, just some gashes and burns. I have established that he is a doctor by his gown and the stethoscope around his neck. I hear someone walking in, it's my mum. The second I see her she has her arms around me. She asks how I'm feeling and shows me picture of what used to be our house and the memories come back, all the pain hits me in a single rush and I'm forced to lie back down. I continue looking at the photo, remembering what it used to look like compared to now. As I examine the photo, I see what looks to be a cigarette on the ground, where the kitchen used to be. No one in our house smoked so how could that be there? Maybe the oven wasn't left on? Maybe the fire wasn't an accident after all...?! ■

THE FINAL RECKONING

Max Lightbody · Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

It has been years since the virus hit. Years since the world fell into chaos, and two days since I lost my brother. It happened in the blink of an eye. It hit our shores ten years ago today. No one was ready and no one had any idea of what was about to happen. I had just been dismissed from my job because of it and then it all went downhill from there. The Prime Minister tried and failed to contain the virus as people kept spreading it without knowing they were infected. After the first lockdown, it was looking good, it looked like we could just move forward and move on with our lives, but that was definitely not the case. This dystopian land is now home for a lot of young families.

When the second wave hit, I had a feeling that this virus was something else, something more sinister. My mother said that the modern-day war was no longer guns and explosives, but biological. Then the worst happened, America started a war with China and from then on, the world was never the same.

Immediately, we rushed to help our army. We went straight there to help fight, but that was our biggest mistake. One thing led to another and before we knew it the whole world was at war. Countries fell into chaos, famines happened throughout the world. Many deaths occurred, nukes were launched, countries were destroyed, creating a dystopian landscape. People were dying so rapidly that half the population was wiped out. It was well and truly survival of the fittest.

Fast forward to today. Not many people remain. We set up a guild called the Black Dragon. My son was the one who created it. We hunt for survivors or anything that could help us survive. People have travelled from far and wide to live here because as of right now it is the safest place on this earth. Most places are now uninhabitable because of the radiation. The nuclear war was probably worse for everyone as whole countries died, whole ecosystems were destroyed, and many animals became extinct.

There is almost nothing left indicating that there was a human life. Buildings have been demolished and eroded, football stadiums are just grass now. The people that are still alive managed to salvage some of the buildings to create homes and stores. Melbourne is now more like a jungle. Instead of magnificent

skyscrapers, there are huge trees, the highways became rivers, and the Yarra is now bigger than ever. The Yarra is now our main water source.

The main problem we face isn't the animals or the surrounding area, it's not even radiation. The problem we face is other tribes trying to get our land. We call them the Grounder People, savages are what they are. They, like many others, became hostile and violent. We have tried many times to communicate but failed.

"Sam, come quick, there is something you need to see."

I sprint out of the room and fling the door open to see my worst nightmare... a dead body. And immediately my heart sinks as I saw the person's face. It is my brother, Stacey. I fall to my knees and just started to cry. It is like my world comes crashing down around me. All my walls come down. I was vulnerable to everyone and everything, there is nothing I can do to save myself. Suddenly everyone stiffens as we hear faint sirens in the background.

I call out "everyone inside now!!". Everybody rushes inside, locks the doors and covers the windows. The sirens become louder and louder. And then it all goes silent, still no sound for miles. It is as if no one was there at all. Suddenly a wave of sound hits us like a punch to the guts. It was the Marauders, a ruthless team of assassins who pick on anyone that is not part of their group. No one makes a sound, no one moves a muscle, and no one dares to take a breath.

I see their feet from under the bed. They are looking around frantically they want to get someone. I reach for my pistol, as I grab it I hit my head on the bed making a loud bang. Immediately they come over to the bed and drag me out from under it. I struggle to break free, but it is no use... everything goes black. When I wake up, I see a bland cell, four white walls, a thick black door and a small hole to fit the food through. I look up with a smile on my face as the door unlocks, I say, "Did they suspect anything?"

"Not a thing sir." the man replied.

"Good," I say under my breath. There is one thing that I wish I had done, hide the body. After all, it wasn't anyone who killed my brother it was me. ■

AND A DASH OF RESPECT

Stella Thompson · Year 9 · Emmaus College

Ding! The oven timer rang loudly. The cake was ready. I am entering the Great Traveling Bake off. Any baker knows, that getting some practice in before the big day is crucial! Last year, I didn't place. This year, I plan on winning first place, the 'Golden Chef Hat', and \$10,000. Every year, there is a new theme, but you don't know what it is until you get to the competition. You must bake a cake that resembles the given theme in some way. There is going to be past competitors there, and some of us have a bit of a rivalry. The pressure is on, and I don't cope well under pressure.

It's February 14th, 2020, and I'm in Vancouver, Canada. I'm shivering, it's absolutely freezing. The crisp air is piercing through my fingertips as I try to carefully write my name on the piece of paper at the registration desk. Hopefully the heat from the ovens will warm us up. The judges are about to announce the theme. Every contestant is eagerly waiting to hear what the theme was. Oh, my goodness. Heston Blumenthal just walked onto the stage! Everyone froze in anticipation. He opened his mouth. I'm on the edge of my seat. "Love!" of course. I should have seen this coming. It's February 14th! Valentine's day. I sprinted to my baking station and got out my notepad. I am going to attempt to re-create the famous scene from *Lady and The Tramp*, where Lady and The Tramp kiss. I intend on making the flavor of the cake caramel, with crushed honeycomb pieces stuck to the edges of the cake, and out of fondant and modeling chocolate, I will create the scene.

I begin to make the batter. After multiple trials, I just can't seem to get the cake batter right. I have started over several times. I decide to begin creating the scene from *Lady and The Tramp* that would sit on top of the cake. We only have 3 hours to complete this bake, so I know I need to hurry. I am running out of time. I finished putting the final touches on the scene, and I almost have the perfect batch of cake batter as well. But something was missing. Everyone gets their own 'finishing

touches cupboard', so I am looking in mine to see if anything in there would make my cake stand out. I pulled things out, I moved things around, I found nothing. But every cloud has a silver lining, right? And then, in the very back corner of the top shelf, there was a tall skinny bottle that was full right up to the top. The label was half peeled off. I lifted the label up, so it stuck to the bottle again. In messy writing, it read, "RESPECT". This was something I had never seen before. I took a spoon and tasted it. It was the most luscious, mouthwatering, flavorsome confection I have ever tasted. I poured 2 teaspoons into the batter. Finally, with 1 hour and a half left, it was perfect. That was the thing I was missing. I made a big batch of cake batter so I could split the mixture and bake 3 smaller cakes to stack on top of each other. After placing my cakes in the oven, I aggressively crushed the honeycomb into pieces, just like I am going to crush this competition, hopefully.

Ding! I love that sound. My caramel cakes were ready. They smelled amazing and looked perfect. I stacked the cakes, covered them in blue fondant and stuck the honeycomb on. The last step. Putting the movie scene on top of my cake. My cake looked immaculate. I pick it up and carefully put it down on the judges table. I now must step away from my cake. All I can do now is wait.

At last. It is my turn to be judged. My heart is beating outside of my chest and my palms are sweaty. The judges all held up their notebooks. Every single one of them says 10. I pinched myself. I wasn't dreaming. Had I just gotten a perfect score? Then it hit me. I won the competition! How did this happen? Why did this happen to me? Not the girl that used liquid nitrogen and had a moving cake? I had so many questions. But at the end of the day, I didn't care. I won. I walked out of that competition wearing my golden chef hat, holding my prize-winning cake and my new favorite ingredient, "RESPECT". ■

...RESPECT, REALLY

Daniel Morillo Morales · Year 7 · Emmaus College

There was The Great City, with towering skyscrapers, where a lucky few lived in wealth and grandeur, while billions of others were shunned, even though they carried the weight of the city on their shoulders.

The Exalted lived in skyscrapers and frolicked in parks of magnificence, ignoring the pain and struggle of The Invisible Men living beneath their very feet. In the centre of the city lay the Royal Palace – with its massive spires made from crystal and grand banquets in these great dining halls – there lived the Royals. They would do anything to retain their power and keep their subjects, The Invisible Men, in line. The Great City was built on a massive platform that stretched as far as the eye could see, it was held up by pillars built in concentric rings. In the space underneath the city, generations of The Invisible Men eked out their lives in crumbling concrete compounds, with parents struggling to make ends meet while their children were forced to beg on the streets. Few managed to make it past their twenties – they were forced to work in factories all their lives for mere pennies. Armed enforcers regularly raided the streets, and many Invisible Men disappeared after being accused of the slightest crime against the elite. Hospitals were nonexistent in the slums and education was banned to stop the population from believing that life could get better – but they already knew they were missing something, and what they desperately craved was something that the Exalted didn't even know they needed. The Invisible Men were treated the same as slaves – all hoping that something, someday will change their lives.

One day, in the grey twilight underneath the city, the Central Pillar released a loud rumbling sound, as if the utopia above was about to come crashing down. The Invisible Men were drawn towards the pillar like moths to a flame. Suddenly a huge door opened in the pillar high above their heads, and a bright white light shone out. Purple steps emerged from the Pillar, leading from the door, and spiraling their way down to a platform. From the door emerged the Royals. They wore long gold coats embedded with jewels and swirls of purple. They were led down the stairs by their armed escort whose boots were thundering against the stairs.

A man with a bushy, brown beard and beady

snake-like eyes as well as a crown on top of his head stepped away from the pack of Royals and moved to the front of the stage, crinkling his nose at the sight of the ragged crowd of The Invisible Men. His amplified voice boomed out across the entire undercity: “PEASANTS! TO PROVE YOUR LOYALTY TO YOUR MOST GLOURIOUS RULERS, YOU MUST RAZE YOUR HOMES TO MAKE WAY FOR A NEW PALACE!” Enraged murmurs raced through the crowd as the Royal smirked and whispered to himself “Or else...”

In one dank crumbling building in a far-flung corner of the undercity, several people were standing around an old circular table talking in rapid whispers. After the Royal's grand announcement, many were feeling cheated and enraged. The Invisible Men in the room were talking about fairness and equality, their grand plan was to spread the word among the Invisible Men, through the only newspaper from authors who weren't Exalted. They knew that the Exalted would not read the newspaper as they were too caught up in their own lavish lives.

A small boy at an intersection, buried in newspapers was crying out at the top of his lungs, trying to earn enough to feed his sickly parents. He didn't know that he was a messenger, that would spread word of the revolution. Their fight for equality had begun.

Silently, support for the revolution grew and grew. As the date drew closer enforcers patrolling the undercity started to find that mysterious occurrences seemed to be happening ...their transmitters would stop working for hours on end for no apparent reason, until one day they didn't turn on at all. It was finally time for change.

By the dark of night, The Invisible Men stormed from their cramped living spaces – from their sweat shops, slums, and the scarce supply stations – all the way to the surface like a giant wave washing up on a beach. Hiding in the shadows, they quickly dealt with the Enforcers – the enforcers, disoriented by the total radio silence – and homed in on their main target. The die had been cast and there was no going back. They stormed the Royal Palace, and captured the terrified royals, ending thousands of years of poverty and inequality. At last the Exalted thought “What were they missing?” ■



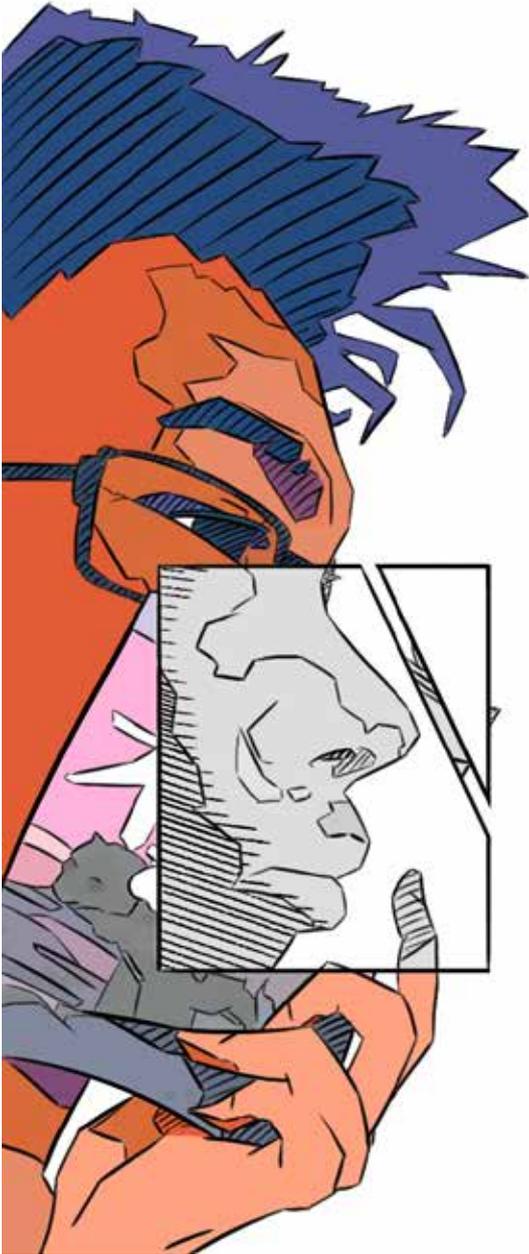
Brookelyn Finn
Year 9 · Padua College

Respect for the Environment



Lilly How
Year 7 · Padua
College

Respect Our Earth



Daniel Trang
Year 10 · Salesian College, Chadstone



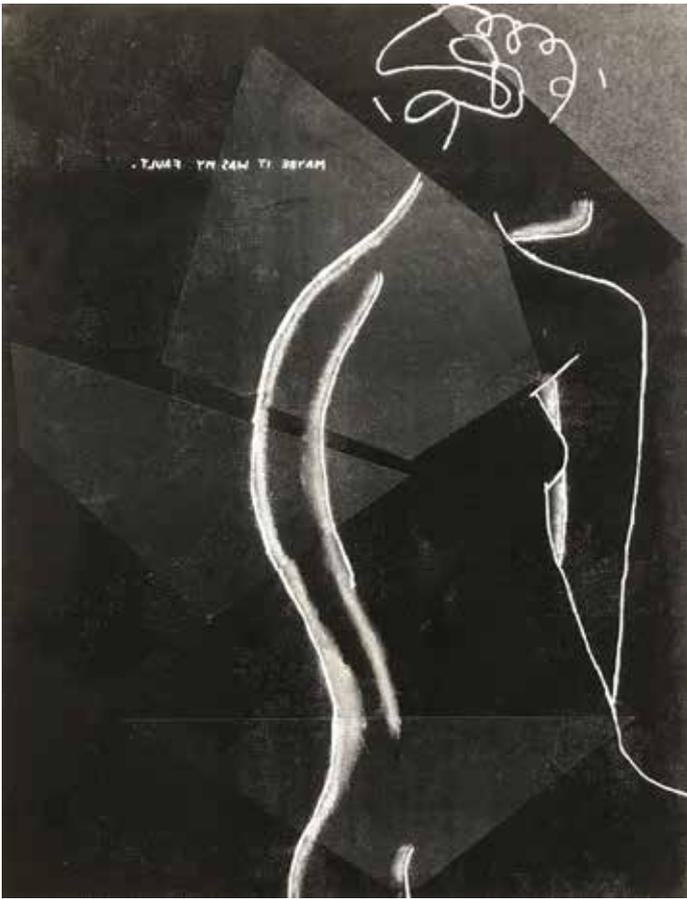
Emily Thanasios
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

HELP!



Veronica Leon-Vizcaino
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

BLM



Alessia Kyrifidis
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

Maybe it was my fault



Scarlett Mateos
Year 8 · Marymede Catholic College

Urban Landscape



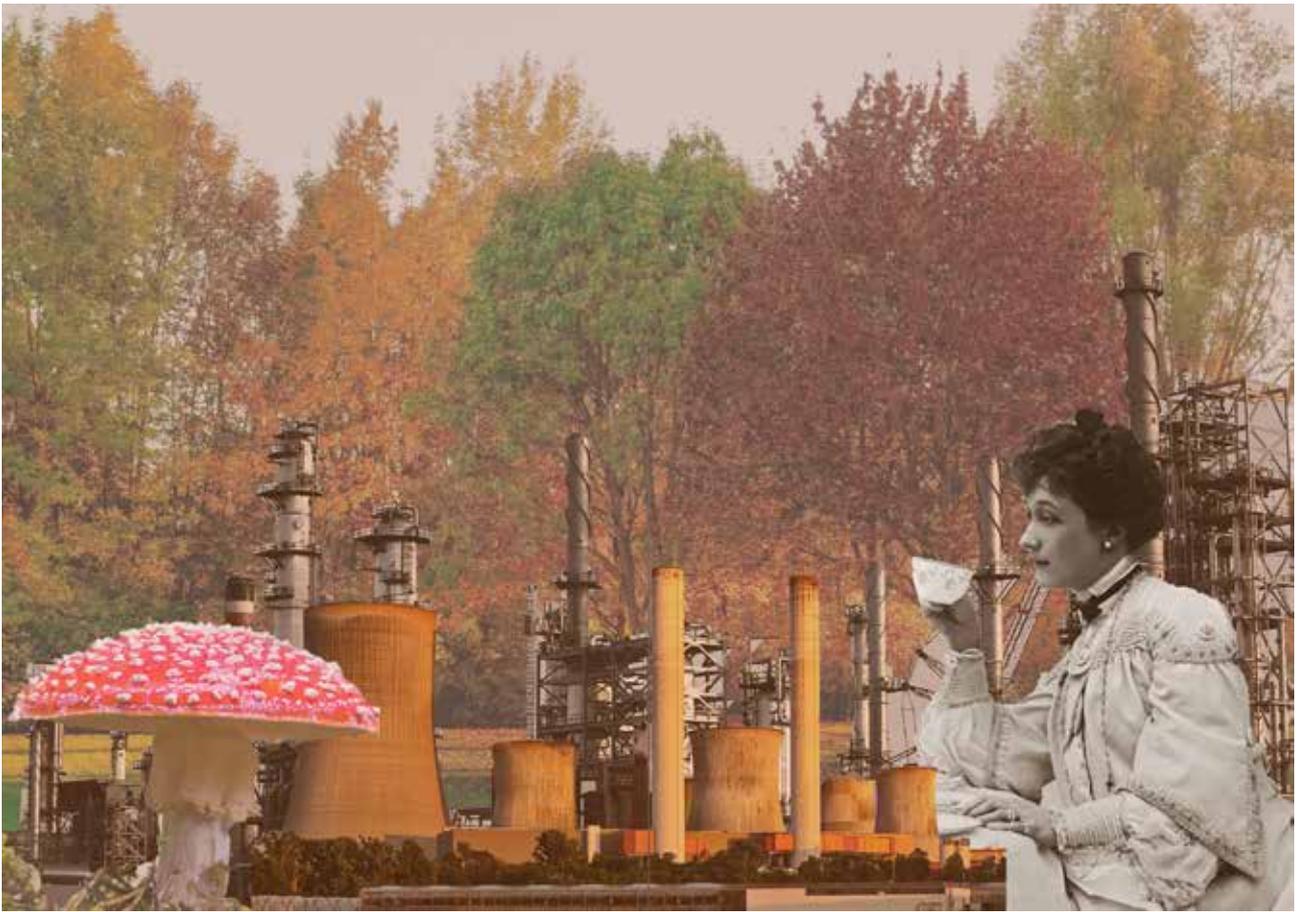
Boyan Poposki
Year 7 · Marymede Catholic College

Collage



Leo Karakatsanis
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

Digital Photo Collage



Stephanie Kurtzman
Year 9 · Marymede Catholic College

Digital Photo Collage

DIARY ENTRIES

Matthew Yap · Year 7 · Salesian College Chadstone

19th September, 2050

Sunday

The streets are barren. The air is black. What has this world turned into? I thought I lived a life of prestige, my father being the owner of a massive business in the industry. My house is a mansion, without any people to show it off to. We ride in a limousine, but there's no point – the roads are empty. I remember the days when this city was flourishing. My dad's business was growing. Life was paradise. When the air was filled with the deafening roar of car engines, the days when there were actual *people* outside. What is the point of windows anymore? All you can see is the thick, cold, polluted air my father has created. People used to *respect* him. They really did. But he used that power to turn into a monster. He's obliterating the environment for his own betterment. The leader of the most powerful business in our city is a megalomaniac, and now my father is trying to destroy the world we live in – all for power and money. He is *abusing* the power he has. He doesn't even know what he is doing. But in reality, all you need to do is look outside the window to see the devil he's created. I can only hope with all my heart that this will get better.

22nd October, 2050

Monday

It's been over a month already, and things haven't changed. Tears are running down my cheek as I write this. My father's vision for a greater community has blurred. The news, the media, *everyone* is ranting about this horrific landscape my father is creating. Every single day, I wake up to madness. Reporters outside my door. People asking for interviews with my father. As if every breath I take, a tree is chopped down. With every step I take, factories billow even more of that dense, acrid smoke into the air. Every tear that rolls down my face is a step closer to my city being ravaged until there is nothing left. I really hope that this insanity will stop one day. But all I can do is hope. My dad is spending more and more time at his desk, planning his "next step to greatness". The environment is being slaughtered, and the people are desperate for help.

30th October, 2050

Monday

The day has finally come. The day I'd been dreading this whole time. The people have started their protests. They're outside. Banging against my window. Do they not have any respect for my privacy? I was getting used to the isolation, the fact that nobody walked on the desolate roads. And now, they try to shock me the other way around. Outside my window is an absolute frenzy of people, shouting about the maelstrom my dad has made. I can't even look out my window to see the whirlwind of chaos going on out there. I'm scared. I'm really scared. My father has gone so hungry for power that he isn't thinking straight. He is putting all of our safety into his fist and squeezing it until it shatters to pieces, all for what? For his own betterment? It's not safe here anymore. The air isn't breathable. People can't even go outside. And the worst part about it? My father has caused all this mess. Our society is crumbling, and taking down our Earth with it.

27th November, 2050

Tuesday

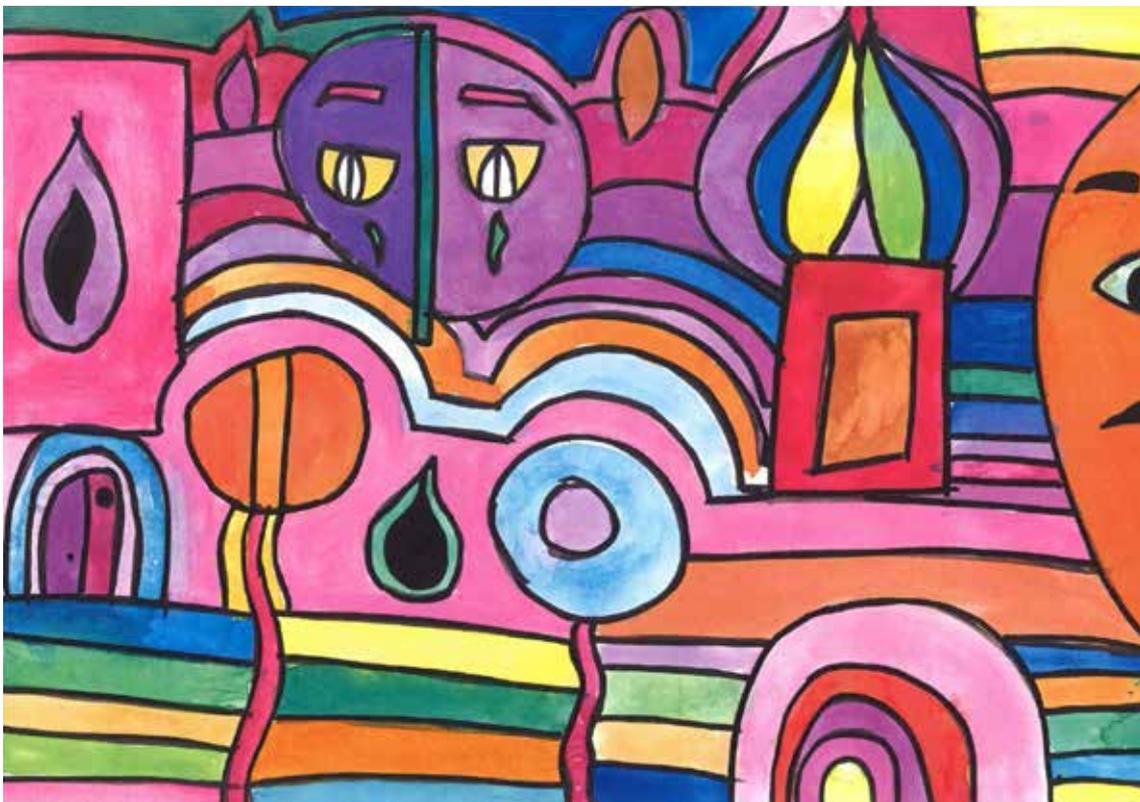
It's been weeks since I heard my dad say he was going to destroy the city, and the situation has gotten worse. The protests are continuing, and they are intensifying. I wake up to the sound of people screaming their lungs out right outside my window. What has my dad done? The air is now smoke. The roads are full of protest. I can almost feel nature's pain from all the disrespect. It breaks my heart to see all of this hypocrisy going on. People are out there, begging for this mania to recede. But nothing will stop my father, not anything, will stop him from wreaking havoc onto the environment. I remember the days when the sun was shining, and fresh air filled my lungs. All of that is gone, thanks to a power-hungry maniac that is my father. I tell him to stop, I tell him to look outside and I ask him, "Is this really what you wanted?" He hesitates, but the reply is always "Yes".

31st December, 2050
Wednesday

I ran today. I ran for my life. Past the desolate roads, past the factories, past all the protesters pushing and shoving, I ran. The wind howled, the rain soaked my clothes, but I ran. I saw all the horrors of the land as I trampled through the grass – wilted flowers, all shrivelled up; dead grass, all brown and crumpled against my feet; and all the dead leaves floating down like ballerinas from the trees. Our environment has been put into a blender and whizzed on high until there is nothing left. I miss putting out the bird feeder in the morning, watering the flowers each day, even mowing the lawn and taking in the scent of freshly cut grass. We had a lot of respect for the environment. That was, until my dad squeezed all the life out of it. Now, we have nothing left as I sit here on the dry grass, thinking. Just thinking, about what will happen next.

1st January, 2051
Thursday

I found something today. I found a flower petal. It flew through the afternoon gale, dancing through the wind elegantly, straight into the palm of my hand. This is a sign. It's a sign that there *is* something else out there, something that *respects* our environment. And I'm headed there right now. ■



Elizabeth Cooper
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College



Dylan Be
Year 10 · Salesian College Chadstone



Lucy Franich

Year 11 · Star of the Sea College

Ryle

The brief for producing this work was to paint or draw someone who helped me through lockdown. I chose to paint my friend, Ryle, who lives around the corner from my house. We went on walks all the time with our two dogs, Bobbi (black) and Coco (white). I am really lucky to have a friend who lives so close to me and I am grateful for the times we shared with our dogs during lockdown.

THE REALLY DANGEROUS VIRUS

Nina Browne · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

The dull beeps from the scanners echoed through the aisles. The constant murmur of shoppers sounded in my ears. This was too much for me. I hated being crammed into what seemed like small corridors with complete strangers. And this outbreak of the virus wasn't making things any better. Everyone seemed to think that it was the end of the world. People were going to the extreme measures of grabbing absolutely everything off the shelves. And when I say extreme, I mean extreme because right now, I'm watching two women fight over toilet paper.

An introvert like myself has a special skill set. Because I'm so quiet, I'm often quite observant and can determine what type of person someone is before I even talk to them. These women are clearly the type who think the world is going to end because of this stupid virus. It may be a worldwide pandemic and I may get to stay inside but it's really going over the line. There was no need to fight over toilet paper. I mean, come on. Toilet paper? It may be a luxury but definitely not one we need to fight over! They were going to each other's throats, yelling, scratching, slapping. I didn't want to watch it anymore so I moved to the next aisle.

Mum had asked me to go shopping today since she was at work and wouldn't have time to. I didn't really wanna leave the house but I knew I had to be helpful. Ever since the divorce, Mum had been a bit distraught and working extra-long hours to provide for herself and me. I sighed. Perhaps pizza for dinner would help?

I walked down the frozen food aisle, scanning the shelves for pizza. I spotted the boxes and opened the door. The cold air hit me like a wave and I shivered. I grabbed a pizza and a bag of chips for good measure. I closed the door and turned to face the trolley but was met with the face of a man. I almost dropped the food in shock, as he was right up in my face. Just staring at me. And making me really uncomfortable.

'Can I help you?' I asked the man, trying to remember my manners. He blinked and leaned back, straightening up to his full height. Now that I had a better view of it, I realised that he was quite old, maybe in his late seventies of early eighties. He had a beard made of uncombed white hair and was dressed in a dirty and wrinkled coat. He looked like he hadn't showered in a while.

'This virus is a bit of a pain, isn't it?' Oh no. He was starting a conversation. I really hate it when strangers do this.

I plastered a fake smile on my face and answered as best I could. 'Yeah, it's a bit of a bummer.'

A bit of a bummer? A bummer? Really? God, I'm so strange.

'Just like these times,' the man said.

I looked at him. 'Sorry?' I asked. He smiled. 'You said you're strange. I have to admit, these are strange times.' I mentally cringed. Did I really say that out loud?

'Strange times?' I said questioningly. The man stared into the freezer with a neutral expression on his face. 'The human race doesn't seem to be ready for this. We're panicking. It shows how vulnerable we are. I assume you've seen the two women fighting in the other aisle?' He turned to me. I sighed. 'Yeah, I saw them. I think it's kinda stupid, to be honest.' The man nodded. 'You seem to be a very intelligent young lady. Clearly, if a girl your age can see the stupidity of this situation, then the rest of the world could. Perhaps we're just choosing to ignore it.'

His words flowed around in my mind. They seemed perfectly reasonable to me. The facts he was stating. Were they facts? Or just opinions? Are we choosing to ignore the rational reasons that are right in front of us?

I turned to the man but found him gone. I turned my head and looked at both sides, scanning the aisle for him but he had disappeared. I blinked. This was all unreal. And unreal is not my thing.

I closed the door with my foot and walked to the kitchen, hands full of groceries. I placed the bags on the kitchen counter and looked up at the clock. I still had time to do homework that I was given, so I made my way to my bedroom and began to work.

But I was confused. Not because of my homework. But because something wasn't right. On my street there's a family with 4 young boys and another family with 4 young girls. Every day, after school, they meet on the street to play soccer and I can hear them yelling and talking to each other, as my bedroom window faces the street. But today, I couldn't hear anything. I went to the window and looked. There on the road, stood the man from the supermarket.

I stood there at my window watching him. He wasn't doing anything, just standing and facing down the street away from me. Staring into the distance. I sigh. I can't believe I'm doing this.

I close the door cautiously and walk down my front path and out onto the road. I stood there for a moment, wondering what to say to him. Wondering what he would do. Finally, I spoke.

‘What are you doing here?’ I asked. ‘How did you find me?’

The man turned, the sunlight catching on his face. ‘The world is very different.’ He said quietly.

Suddenly, I felt lightheaded. Not enough to knock me out but enough for me to notice. I looked around and with confusion realised the state of my street. Overgrown plants smothered the houses. Cracks ran through the road and rubbish flew silently with the wind. The paint job on the fences were peeling and cracked, like they hadn’t been repainted in a long time.

I frowned. ‘What happened here?’ I asked the man, turning back to him. He stayed facing the sun as he spoke.

‘You are seeing the future. The future of what the virus does to the civilization. Humans have left, hoping to travel to a safer environment. When there was no need to.’

I stayed quiet, thinking about what he had just said. I went to stand beside him, looking into the sunset.

‘The act of mass panic spreads quicker than any virus. Meaning people fail to see the bright side of situations.’ The man mused. I looked at him. ‘Maybe we need to calm down then,’ I turned back towards the sun. ‘Find the light in the darkest times.’ The man looked at me and held out his hand, smiling. ‘Stick together and support each other.’ He added.

I took his hand and together, we walked down the road towards the sun. Towards the light.

Never blinking once. ■

JOY

Isabel Cubelic · Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Masks to cover fear and sadness.
Homes to hide away in.
Streets are quiet and roads are deserted.
Smells coming from the local shops are slowly
fading away.
Doors are shut and you have nothing to do.
Out of nowhere you hear a sound coming from
Mr Whippy's ice-cream van!
People bolt out of their homes,

Still wearing masks
But their eyes brightly shine.
The smell of ice-cream, Chocolate and Nuts
Makes everyone's tummies rumble.
The soft serve ice-cream melts in your mouth.
Joy fills the air.
People waiting everyday,
For Mr Whippy's ice cream van! ■

COVID 19 RAP

Joshua Fraser · Year 4
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Normal lives seem historical
Oh corona, this is so horrible.

I can't even get off my sofa
To get another cup of soda.

This virus has turned into an enormous crisis
Oh corona, you're not the nicest

We can't even travel out of the town
Cause we're in lockdown

But this virus will end soon...
And everyone will be over the moon! ■

A BIG HEART

Lulu Hudson · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

If I was red, I'd be as kind as a heart
And I'd walk on the land putting kindness at
the start.

If I was orange, I'd watch frangipanis bloom
And I'd smell their lovely sweet perfume.

If I was yellow, I'd colour the sun
And I'd spread round all the fun.

If I was green, I would climb the tallest tree
Looking down on the world as if it belonged
to me.

If I was blue, I'd float on seas
I'd let my emotion be taken by the breeze.

We are all different colours, looks apart
But we all have one thing in common...
A very big heart! ■

SILENCE IN THE CITY

Siena Gendala · Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

City streets buzzing with people; walking and talking and making noise.

City roads buzzing with cars; beeping and honking and making noise.

City shops buzzing with customers; looking and buying and making noise.

A cough.

A cold.

A spread.

A disease.

City streets, no people, no noise.

City roads, no cars, no noise.

City shops, no customers, no noise.

Melbourne lockdown.

Not allowed to...

Walk and talk

Beep and honk

Look and buy

Walk on streets

Drive on roads

Buy in shops

Silence in the city. ■

LITTLE RAIN FROG WAITS

Alfonso Conterno · Year 4
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Come out Little Frog, waiting is over,
Rain has fallen, time to eat.
Come out Little Frog, the sun is up,
Rain has fallen, time to explore.
Come out Little Frog, you must be hungry,
Rain has fallen, insects to find.
Come out Little Frog, lonely no more,
Rain has fallen, friends to meet.
Come out Little Frog, darkness is here,
Rain has fallen, time to dig.

Hide Little Frog until it rains again. ■

ONE CURIOUS DOG

Jack Hodgson · Year 4
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

One curious dog
One open gate
One great escape
One speeding car
Slams on the brakes
One helpful neighbour
Picks up the phone
One frightened dog
Now safely home ■

LOCKDOWN WEEKEND

Maxwell Hallam · Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Get up.	Full steam, burning hot...	Eat toasties.
Skip school clothes.	Owww! Oww! Oww!	Munch! Munch! Munch!
Stay'n in the pjs.	Get out.	Go outside on the tramp.
Eat some breaky.	Red back.	Do flips, have fun.
Ssslurp! Ssslurp!	Leave steam behind.	2:30 bike ride with my mate.
Chuck the spoon and bowl in the sink...	Get changed.	Come home.
Bit too hard...	Get comfy.	4:30 early dinner.
Crack! Crash! Bang!	Watch T.V.	In pjs again.
Hop in the shower.	Time flies by.	Hop in bed.
	Lunchtime.	REPEAT! ■

A LOST MEGALODON

Jackson Crinis · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I sat on a chair at the beach
A baby megalodon came within reach
He looked kinda lost, not sure what to do
Til he saw mamma megalodon and said, "Toot-a-loo." ■

OUR COUNTRY

Charlotte Lynch · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

In the tippy top trees, koalas sleep
Along bright pink skies, kookaburras glide
By rushing creeks, platypuses seek
Inside deep dark burrows, wombats furrow
Upon grassy paddocks, kangaroos frolic
This is our country. ■

I'D BE

Audrey Henderson · Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

If I was red, I'd be as delicious as an apple
And I'd fill your hearts with goodness.

If I was orange, I'd be a tasty juicy fruit
And I'd eat with fabulous friends.

If I was yellow, I'd be as bright as the burning
midday sun
And I'd burn like dragon fires.

If I was green, I'd be free, rolling in the grassy hills
And I'd dance with fearless friends.

If I was blue, I'd be as bright and deep as the
ocean

And I'd bounce and bellow like a big whale.

If I was indigo, I'd be the atmosphere just
before space

And I'd be gliding like God

If I was violet, I'd be in a green shady bed
And I'd brighten the day with blooming
beautiful flowers. ■

DREAM BIG

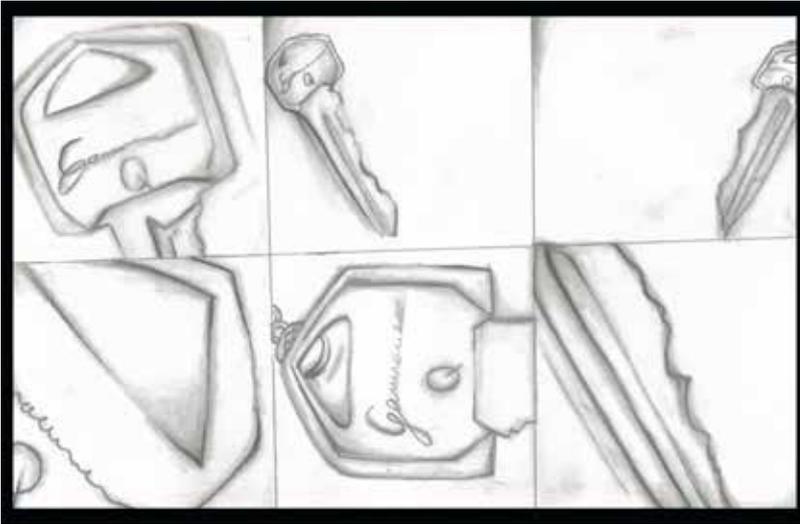
Emily Spencer · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I am the rainbow that calls to you
I am the rainbow that sings your song
I am the rainbow that reminds you to smile
I am the rainbow that brightens the dark
I am the rainbow that hugs you
I am the rainbow that appears after your tears
I am the rainbow that helps you to be grateful
I am the rainbow that builds your confidence
I am the rainbow that makes you DREAM BIG ■

CHECKMATE

Noah Simmons · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

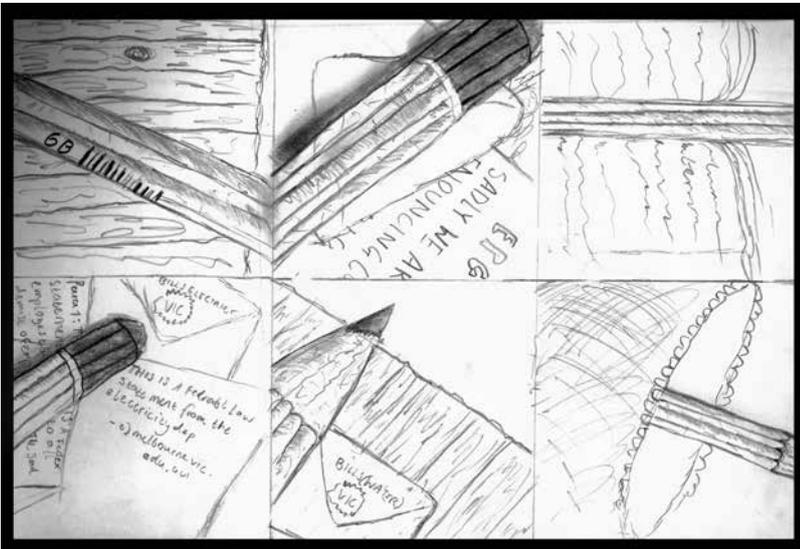
Black and white tiles as I think about
protecting the King.
The emptiness provides endless options.
Floor to ceiling windows each with their
own story.
With no one listening what will become
of these tales?
Now, in deep sleep, but desperately
wanting to wake
And share the dreams with all the King's
horses and all the Queen's pawns. ■



Hayley Duff
 Year 7 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

The Key

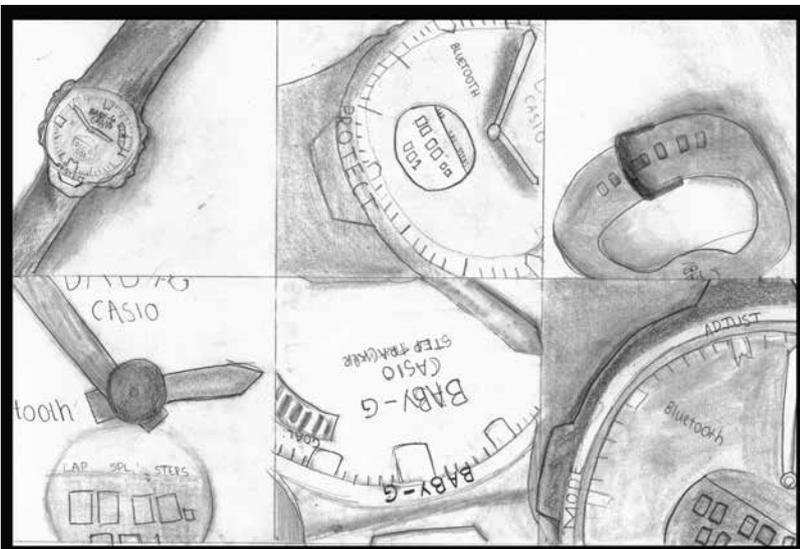
We are always searching for the key to life's successes, but we are never satisfied with what we have. Have we every stopped to really appreciate what we already have?



Jakob Zambara
 Year 7 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

The Letter

This has been a really unusual year and many people have suffered because they have been isolated from others. What if we all took the time to write at least one letter to someone we know who lives alone to help brighten up their day?



Mia Gauci
 Year 7 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

Time

There is never enough time in the day. People are busy racing from one place to another always conscious of the time. What if time stood still? What would we do?



Elizabeth Filipovic
 Year 8 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

Flowers

Our gardens are filled with beautiful flowers, but the blooms can fade, and you have to wait around twelve months for the next flowering. Being able to paint the flowers allows us to celebrate their beauty all year round.



Jennifer Williams
 Year 8 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

When Flower Crowns Wither

We all want to be respected, to be loved. Yet we are always tearing others down, stripping people of their crowns when they deserve them. All these important values and character strengths that should be our standards are dying, withering away like roses; being replaced with unrealistic and demanding expectations about how we should look and act. But they can bloom again, and we can all receive the respect we deserve, if we show it to others first.



Jennifer Williams
 Year 8 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

What's Hidden Amongst the Leaves?

Animals are very good at camouflaging themselves so that predators and humans cannot find them. It is their way of ensuring their survival.

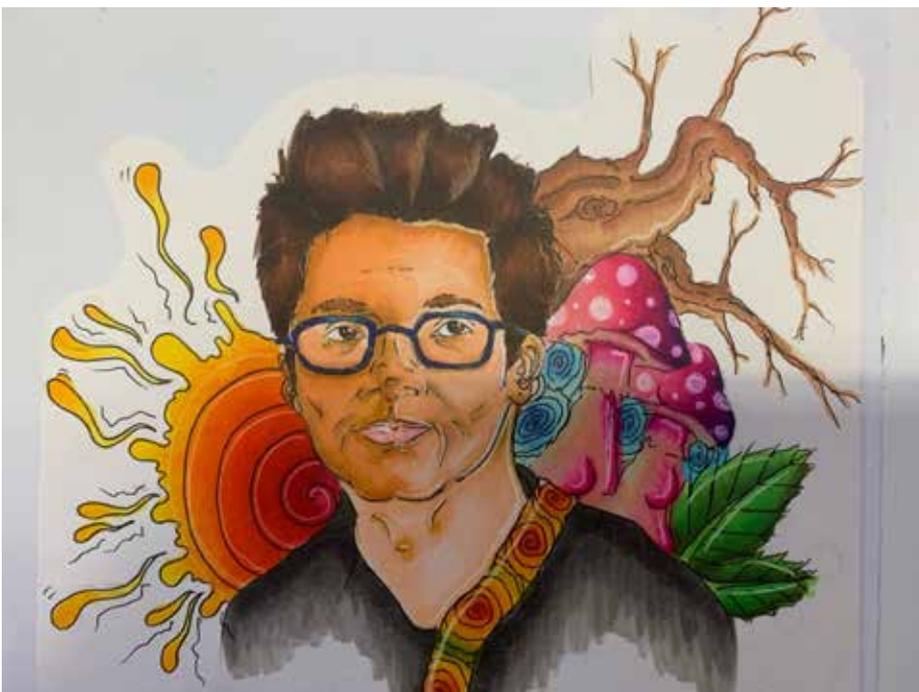


Isabella Iaccino

*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College Sydenham/
North Keilor*

Layla

Sometimes a song speaks to you in a way that transforms you and your situation. When this happens, you need to grab hold of that moment and treasure it and not be in a hurry to move on.



Isabella Iaccino

*Year 12 · Catholic Regional
College Sydenham/
North Keilor*

Wonderful

Respect who you are and try not listen to the negative things that others may say about you. It is important that we all recognise how uniquely wonderful each of us really is. Rather than put people down, it is time to celebrate the gifts each person brings into our lives.



Aiden Lautier

Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Mask

In this time when Covid-19 is causing so much heart ache we can all play a part by following the Premiers instructions. We are asked to respect the needs and health of others and the simplest thing we can do to support others is to wear a mask when leaving the home.



Brooke Condron

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Together We Stand

No matter the gender
No matter the sexual orientation
No matter the colour of the skin
Everyone is entitled to respect
Everyone is deserving of love
Human rights are non-negotiable

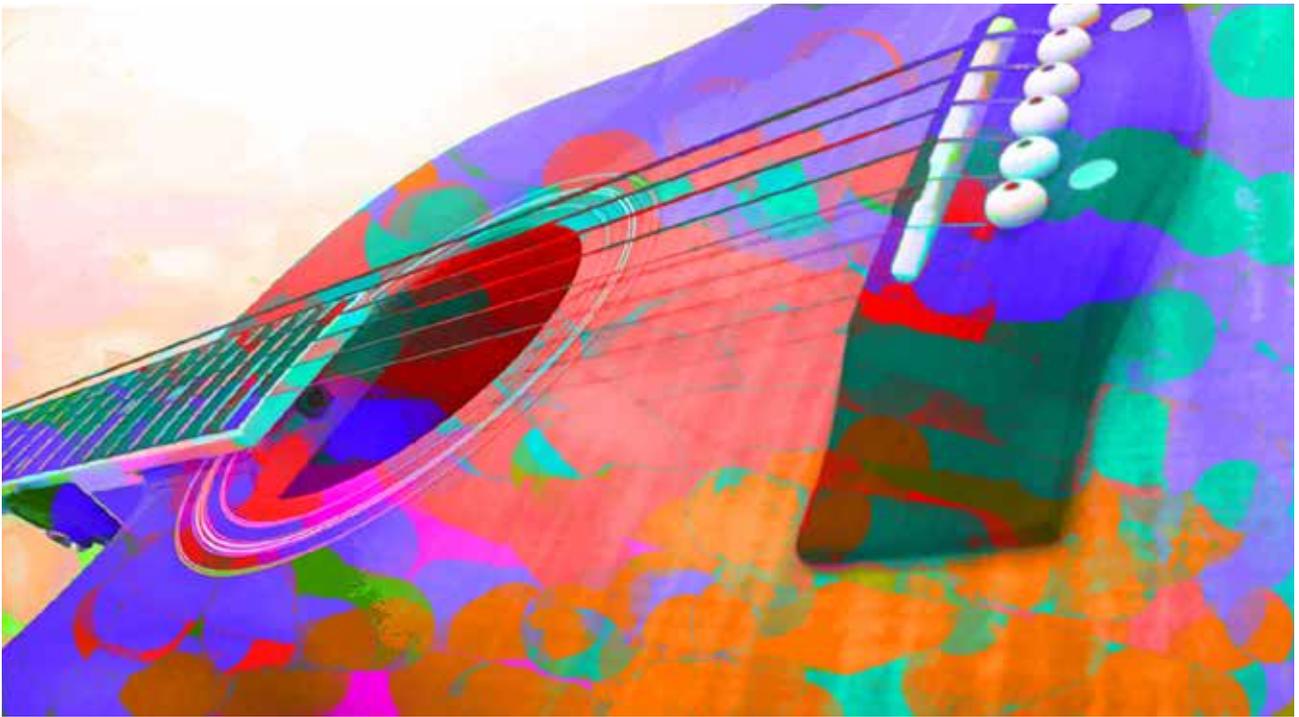


Ruby Vassolo

Year 7 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Respect

We all live in a big bright beautiful world, but we do not always respect this gift that has been given to us. We need to accept differences we see in others. We need to stop polluting our world and we need to care for all creatures that inhabit this world.



Jaslyne Salerno
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Photography

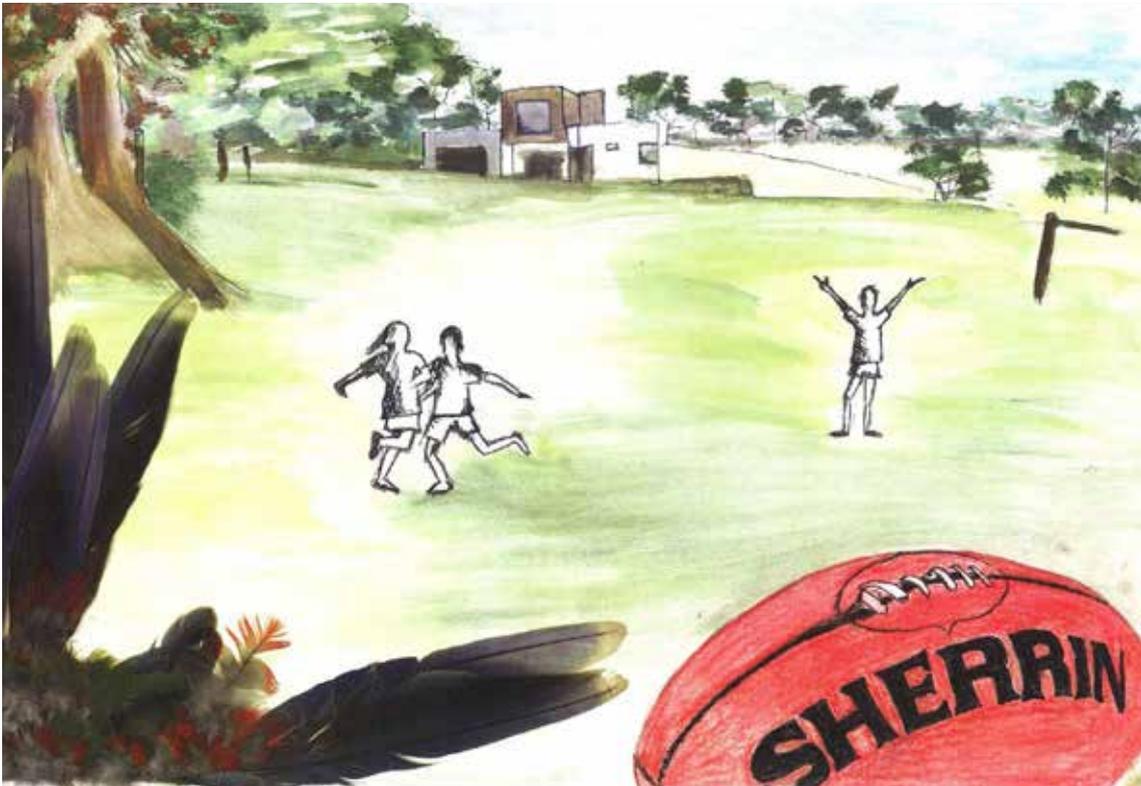
Respect for the music that has always been something that has made sense and that has helped me branch out to the people I now call friends. The LGBTQ+ community has always been supportive, whether on social media or otherwise, and I'm super grateful to be a part of it.

MUSIC

Isabella Herben · Year 9 · Lavalla Catholic College

When I listen to music
I take in the motivating melodies
And let them lift my mood
Until my day is made and my world brightened
Often my face shivers slightly with amazement
When a song is just so powerful
My heart leaps to the sun
When I hear a song I love
It's beautiful, it's brilliant
One of the best things in life
My heart and mind sing along

In tune to these beautiful songs
I am inspired and want to dance and sing
When I hear the music begin
Awesome and inspiring, it moves me
The sweet emotions of these tunes are enough to
make my day
Whether it be Whitney Houston, Beyoncé, The
Cure, Ariana Grande or The Beatles
It's a part of me and there's never a single day
when lyrics don't perform in my mind
Music makes me happy, makes me sad
Makes me fall in love. ■



Addison Howe
Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

HER NAME WAS HANNAH CLARKE

Chloe Lyon · Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Chloe Lyon presented this oration initially internally at Lavalla Catholic College and subsequently as a part of the VCE Plain English Speaking Awards. She is grateful that this important message can now reach a wider audience.

“**A** good bloke.”
“Fun loving.”

“A dedicated dad.”

This is how the Australian media described the man who set fire to his wife Hannah Clarke and their three children: Laianah, Aaliyah and Trey.

Fox Sports Australia tagged their report with:

“*Ex NRL star dies alongside his three children in a Brisbane car fire.*”

No.

He got out of the inferno that he started, leaving his three children and stabbed himself. Gutless.

“*Brisbane Car Fire.*” It sounds like a tragic accident, doesn’t it?

“*Ex NRL Star.*” Who cares if played in the NRL?

Sadly, many of us probably do, we buy the newspapers, we watch the television reports...

“*Goodnight my babies*” read the news.com.au headline.

People don’t say “goodnight” by burning their kids to death. Sounds as if he is a loving father.

NO. NO. NO.

Loving fathers don’t burn their kids to death.

His name was Rowan Baxter, but his name doesn’t matter, the media has already focussed too much on his story.

Her name was Hannah Clarke... before he killed her...and their three children: Laianah, Aaliyah and Trey.

My name is Chloe Lyon and I can’t understand why, when reporting on the perpetrators of domestic violence, in this case, a murder, the focus is rarely on the victim. What does it say about the media? What does it say about us?

Why does the media immediately rush to justify the actions of the murderers?

And why, sometimes, directly and indirectly, is the victim blamed?

This “good bloke” burned his family alive and then took his own life. Witnesses say that Hannah screamed, “he is pouring petrol on me,” while her skin was peeling off.

By focusing on the custody battle between Baxter

and Hannah and by describing Baxter as a good father who was “driven crazy” by being “kept away from his kids,” these articles attempt to justify his actions.

These articles place a degree of blame on Hannah for leaving a clearly dangerous man in an effort to try and keep her children safe. Unlike these articles, Hannah’s brother, more courageously and accurately, described Baxter as a monster.

In a press conference soon after this tragedy, the investigating detective used these words:

“Is this an issue of a woman suffering significant domestic violence and her and her children perishing at the hands of the husband, or is this an instance of a husband being driven too far by issues that he’s suffered, by certain circumstances, into committing acts of this form?” A poor choice of words from an under pressure police officer? Or, maybe, he, like most of us in Australian society have been subtly conditioned by our media to look for reasons to justify the unjustifiable, to consider the “suffering” of the perpetrator and to blame victims for “driving their killers too far”.

Statistics suggest on the average one woman a week is murdered by her current or former partner. Domestic violence is an epidemic in this country YET certain media outlets continue to paint domestic violence perpetrators as “good blokes” “who just snapped because a separation custody case “drove them crazy.”

This insinuates that the victim is to blame for the violence.

That by leaving their violent partners, they have “pushed them too far”.

Domestic violence survivor Rosie Batty, whose eleven-year-old son Luke was murdered by his own father, said “no one is driven to murder, no matter the circumstances or situation they found themselves in... murder is a decision that is deliberate and driven by the need to get revenge and achieve the ultimate act of power and control.”

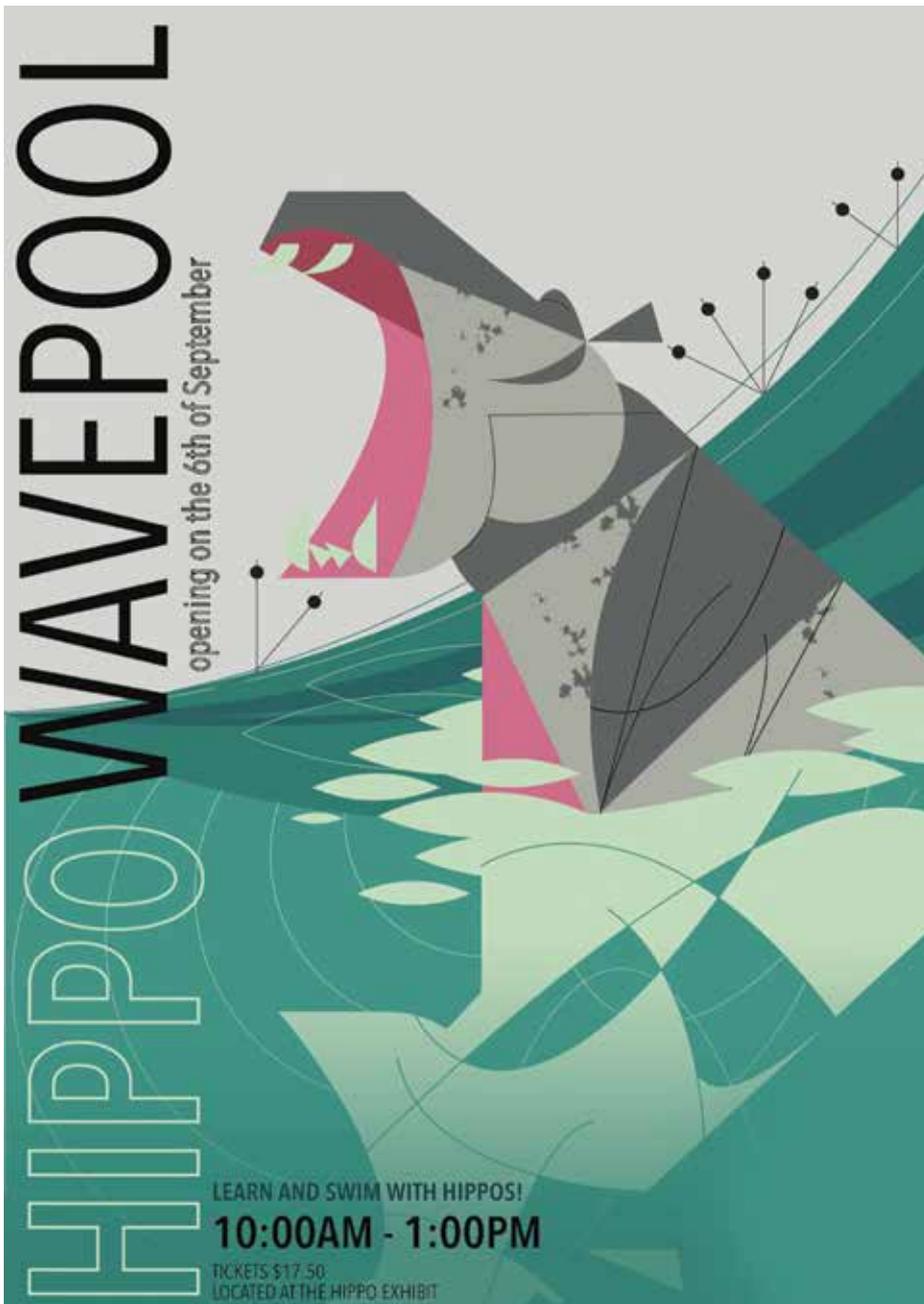
Murderers make a deliberate decision and are responsible for this decision. Our media should focus on celebrating the lives that have been taken, and not try to find reasons why the perpetrators may have been “*pushed too far*” by their victims.

He was not a “dedicated dad...”

He was not “fun loving...”

He may have been an “NRL star”, but I don’t care...

Her name was Hannah Clarke. ■



Steve Teves
Year 11 · CRC Melton

SOPHIA – OUR SPECIAL LITTLE ANGEL

Zander Downie · Year 7 · Whitefriars College

It was so exciting when we heard the news that Uncle Tom and Tata Celeste were having another baby. Their little boy, Clement, was like another brother to us, just one of the boys. He was very cool – French mum, Aussie dad and born in the USA. We called him our Franco-Aussie-Yankee-bro. When their family came back to Australia from the USA, Clement celebrated his second birthday at our house. We baked a cake which was all smashed on one side, with bulldozers and trucks ripping it apart. They were all just part of our family.

So, when Uncle Tom and Tata Celeste told us they were having another baby, everyone was so excited! So many possibilities. Would it be a boy or a girl? What would the baby be like? If it was a girl, how would she go surrounded by so many boys?

Tata Celeste was so happy and so healthy as the baby grew. All the tests came back clear. We were all waiting anxiously for the arrival of ‘our’ new baby. Then the day arrived. Celeste went to the hospital and we waited. We waited. And we waited. No news. Something was wrong.

Days went by. No news. We called but no one answered. We were so worried. Finally, a text from Uncle Tom. “Something is wrong with the baby.” Nothing else. No information. We all felt sick. What was wrong? Surely it couldn’t be that bad? Was the baby going to die? We kept waiting. A week went by. Uncle Tom sent another text. “Our baby girl has Downs Syndrome.” Mum and Dad were devastated. I didn’t understand why. None of us boys really understood why.

“The baby will be lovely,” said Mum, “but she will not be able to live the life that any of us hoped for her. Your uncle and aunt will need some time. Such a loss of potential. The loss of their dreams for her. But we need to show that their beautiful angel will be completely loved by us. That’s what they need.”

When we met baby Sophia, she didn’t look strange. She kept sticking her tongue out, and Tata Celeste kept pushing it back in! It looked so funny. We cuddled and kissed her so much. Clement hung out with us as usual and it was like nothing had changed – for us. But Uncle Tom and Tata Celeste seemed different. Kind of sad. They clearly loved her, but it was like they were afraid for her. And for Clement. I learned why when we all went out to the Arboretum. For the first time, I understood why they were sad and why they feared for her and Clement.

We were all at the Arboretum and mum was holding Sophia. A little boy came over to look at Sophia. When mum turned her to face the boy, his mum grabbed him and pulled him away.

“Oh! You have a Downs Syndrome baby!”

Mum replied, “Actually, I have a baby with Downs Syndrome.”

Then I started to notice how people kept away from Sophia, like she had some kind of contagious disease. When people realised that Clement was her brother, they stayed away from him too. I started to realise how cruel people could be. They didn’t understand. Sophia was such an angel – always happy, smiling and cuddly. Why would people stay away? I was appalled. Why would people do this?

Sophia’s baptism was in the Lutheran Church. Mum cuddled Sophia while we played tiggy with Clement around the Church. There weren’t many people coming into the Church. Some seemed to stay away from Sophia. I asked Uncle Tom where everyone else was. He said, “You learn who your real friends are when you have a baby with a condition like this, mate.” Tata Celeste became a bit tearful.

“There’s nothing wrong with Sophia though,” I said, not fully understanding. “There’s something wrong with everyone else if they stay away from Sophia!”

Uncle Tom smiled at me and tousled my hair.

We spent as much time as we could with them after that, but and after a very hard two years, Uncle Tom and Tata Celeste decided to move back to France. Tom said, “Life is going to be very hard for both of our kids. Tata Celeste needs to go home.”

We miss Uncle Tom and Tata Celeste so much, even though we still see them on FaceTime. We miss Clement and Sophia. What breaks my heart is that so few people could see past Sophia’s appearance. Downs Syndrome can’t be hidden, but who cares? She is so sweet! Her family is awesome.

Please people, get over yourselves. Stop judging. Stop being afraid. Show some respect to people with any kind of disability. They deserve it just as much as anyone else, and their lives are hard enough without other people making it worse. Respect people. Just show some respect. ■

THE LAP

Phillip Deane · Year 8 · Whitefriars College

It seems leaving the house has become a heavy hassle, lazily avoided with any convenient excuse as the icy winter feeds on our vanishing calendar. Regretting my well-worn sport shorts and thin t-shirt, I've begun a timid jog along the street on the smooth footpath. I intend to run around the block, as Mum had repeatedly encouraged. I reassure myself that I will soon begin running, but that I should probably warm up in this cold weather.

As I make a bend, I see someone in a warm hoodie and tracksuit pants, strolling down the footpath towards me a few houses away, I pick up my pace. I had promised Mum I'd keep a safe distance from others, even though I had pointed out that if I encountered two people at once I'd need to move out onto the street, into possible oncoming traffic. My smart remark didn't stir any concern, instead she pointed out that the roads were empty now that we are in lockdown. So, as I pass by the hoodie-man I make sure to veer off onto the weed thriving nature strip, he smirks as I do too and chuckles,

"Scared of germs".

I cast the comment away, and continue on my run, but I can't help but feel that I am acting like a germophobic clown, and that all the precautions set in place over a mere virus are an overreaction. After all, last night's news reporter predicted an unhealthy economy and showed the thousands lining up at Centrelink, 'it's the worst it's been since the great depression'. Yet I know what lives are at stake, I know it won't last forever, I know everyone's doing the best they can. I did the right thing, the respectful thing.

It hasn't been long and I can already taste the sour dryness in my mouth, my breaths have become ragged and I can hear the voices of reluctance in my head justifying defeat. However, I stubbornly refuse to stop as I reach the end of the street where I turn left. Not far off in front of me, I can see two Asian women rugged up in pinkie, puffy, polyester padded jackets. I hesitate before moving forward, and make a mental note to stay well clear from them. I know it's racist, but I did unintentionally, it's difficult to erase a circulated prejudice, they won't notice. They seem to have returned from a walk, and are entering their driveway when suddenly I hear down casting and insulting cries from a man on the opposite side of the street,

"Go back to China," he bellowed with hate.

The women scuttled into their driveway, I could see fear in their eyes as they went indoors. I think of calling out to the man with indignation, but my courageous thoughts evaporate almost as fast as they came to mind. I'm just a boy, what can I do? A sour black hole of guilt sinks deep into my chest as I pass by the women's house. My eyes fall down to the slabs of concrete making up the footpath as my feet carry me over each groove. I think of the news reporter, 'Asian teen spat at, domestic violence increase.' It takes hard circumstances to see the separating grooves in our society, how hard is it to treat others equally?

My steps thud on the concrete like a pulse or a bouncing basketball, I run down a couple of streets and don't come across many people until I take another left. I see the bold, big and bright red letters C, O, L, E, S. It's not usually a busy shopping square but today everyone is crowding the Coles Supermarket. It makes me question how useful our lockdown restrictions are. People are shoulder to shoulder racing inside like a ravenous pack of wolves ready to devour everything in sight. A few trolleys come out piled with the craved toilet rolls after which they disappear as though the supermarket had not been restocked. However, while I ran by I also noticed a young man, offering his only pack of toilet rolls to a very grateful, wheelchair confined woman. Last week we ran out of toilet paper, and I remember my Mum's long expedition visiting all the nearest supermarkets to replenish it.

I now have a controlled breath and rhythm, I can hear the sound of the wind rustling the leaves like the sound made when I pour my breakfast cornflakes. The vibrant and graceful lorikeets are more noticeable and the determined beat of my heart rings in my ears. When I arrive to the home stretch I pass by my neighbour's house, Mrs. Harris. She'd usually be out in her front yard working on her joyful, lively and colour peppered garden, eager to see her grandchildren on the weekends. However, today the garden is overgrown with weeds except for the daffodils which had sprouted. I walked into my black driveway with a new-found respect for those in the 'front line' fighting COVID-19. ■

THE ULTIMATE DEBATE; FINALLY RESOLVED THROUGH POETRY

Aydin Huseyin · Year 8 · CRC Melton

Tomato sauce,
Our liquid gold,
So, put it in the fridge
And it will be cold

Tomato sauce,
Our bright light,
Put it in the fridge
If you want it to taste right

I can't believe people put it in the pantry
If I could,
I would scream like a Banshee

It clearly says on the bottle that it goes in the fridge,
So, they must be blind, or can only see a smidge,
On tomato sauce, Heinz thoughts are simple,
Put it in the fridge and it will be beneficial

My initial thought is to listen to Heinz,
Therefore, your stomach won't feel like a
landmine
You shouldn't redesign where tomato sauce is
confined because that's where it is, in its prime
Don't decline and neglect what I'm saying, because
tomato sauce is the real one you're betraying

It also badly affects the community,
Which could start a bad case of disunity
Then that would only take away your opportunity,
to pay off that hefty annuity

It really is the product made from heaven,
Just read the bottle and make a good impression
I know it might sound like I'm speaking with
aggression,
but it's all a part of my plan to cause your
confession
It's my obsession to fix your expression,
So that I can put us out of misery and out of
depression.

Oh I pray that this will end up in succession,
But this all must be part of my profession
The people that are against me can only dread,
For I am finally speaking the unsaid

These people, devotees, are being misled
But instead of the educated helping them,
They just stroll right past and look ahead

So, I'm here, to lead them in the right direction
And offer some well needed affection
Sloppy tomato sauce, it tastes like poo,
To be honest, I'd rather lick the heel of my shoe.

What if you are eating a bulky meat pie,
And you pull out your sauce, but it doesn't
comply
Then you think "hmm, why doesn't my sauce
taste right,"

Clearly because it's in the pantry all night! ■

EMOTIONS

Sarah Frankas · Year 8 · CRC Melton

Emotions are like a wave
They come and go without a trace
They make you feel
Happy
Depressed

Some people need a case
Just to feel something
Others it comes to naturally
But there is still something lingering

Even though it's just chemicals
It makes us feel intact
They make us feel like animals
Not like robots and that's a fact

Without them, we are nothing
Just mindless puppets of society
Who can't be loving,
Who won't be fiery

Meaning there would be no change
In a world that desperately needs it
Whether it's turning over a whole new page
Or giving your own life an edit

So, let it be a wave
It means we're human
Not in a grave
And let it be
An intrusion
Because in the end,
It's better to have emotion ■

AT A GLANCE

Sarah Norrish · Year 8 · CRC Melton

One glance in a mirror
Can ruin your day,
It makes you hate yourself
In so many ways,

One glance in a mirror
Can make you feel out of place,
Your eyes trick you
To give you a contorted face.

One glance in the mirror
Can ruin your life,
It can make you feel
So very out of line.

People expect us to look like a princess
With our eyes as bright as the stars
And teeth as white as snow
Our hair as soft as silk

People expect us to look like a model
A perfect waist
A perfect face
A perfect basic clothing taste,

But who we are is not our appearance
We are not our face
We are not our dimples
We are not our bra size
Nor our shoe size
We are not our clothing size
We are not the numbers on a scale

We are not our hips
We are not our stomach
We are not our smile
We are not our hair

As the girl walks through the corridor anxiety is
walking right behind her,
Following her every move and every step,
Making her feel like a misfit,
“Don’t hang out with them they’ll give you a bad
rep”
“Hang out with those girls, they’re popular”
“Do it even though they’ll make you upset”
Every laugh that you hear,
Every whisper that is near,
You think it’s about you,
So you shed a tear.

Her heart was pacing, her hands were shaking,
her head was spacing, and her world was
quaking
With all the perfect princesses peacefully prancing
around the corridors,
All she could think about was “damn, I wish I
was that pretty”

When she was 5, she wanted to be a princess,
When she was 7, she wanted to be a ballerina,
When she was 9, she wanted to be a vet,
When she was 11, she wanted to be a teacher,
When she was 13... she wanted to be skinny. ■



Abby Timms
Year 10 · CRC Melton



Amy Seymour
Year 10 · CRC Melton

APOTHEOSIS

Nadine Pardinas · Year 7 · CRC Melton

The sound of laughter echoed throughout the barren scrap yard. By the towers of tires sat two figures. Demi Trace had sky blue hair, emerald eyes which glistened in the sun, and she was with her friend since the age of five, Levi Connor. Both were laughing hysterically when they were interrupted, but was interrupted when they heard a deep, gruff voice call out to them.

“OI!” Griffyn, the owner of the scrap yard was hefty looking 6ft tall man, had a large beard and shiny bald head, and spoke with deep, gruff voice. “We’re goin’ to watch the news, you guys comin’?”

The three of them stepped into a pub. There were 15 others around 40 years of age, sitting scattered around the pub staring intently at a T.V screen. In the room on the right was all their Spirit Animals, (S.A for short) well, all except Demi’s. Spirit animals are like guardians for humans, they each have a unique power. Demi’s parents had abandoned her when she was supposed to get her S.A, however when they realised that their daughter’s S.A wasn’t desirable they left her; when she was three.

The political news was on, “Ladies and Gentlemen, the government is thinking of adding a new law,” said the reporter. The people froze. “A law that revokes the rights of the Rough people. If you wish to share your opinion there will be an open debate with Vice President, Kye Fade. This will be open for anyone no matter the background or Spirit Animal rank.”

They couldn’t believe it. That’s absurd, like hell they’ll let that happen. Demi lifted her head to display the pure *rage* and furiousness and in her eyes. It was as if flames erupted from behind her, seething with rage.

“I’m going.” She demanded. Everyone was silenced. She was right and they knew that. They’ve been oppressed for too long.

“Then go and be safe.” Griffyn spoke.

The travel from the Rough into Mystic was difficult as one had to pass a heavily fortified border. People from the Rough rarely visit Mystic and the guards reluctantly let her through, making snide remarks and cursing under their breath. Her journey to The Central on the free train didn’t take long and she got a lot of hateful stares. As she exited the train a civilian attempted to trip her but she managed a large step over the obstacle.

On the day of the debate Demi was strutting down the path towards the park where it was to be held. The townsfolk she passed were frightened by her radiating furious and demanding aura. At the podium she stood alone the audience gazed upon

her with criticising glares, her every move like hawks. Her opponent, Kye Fade, had yet to show up. Finally he arrived, 5 minutes late.

The MC thanked everyone for turning up yelled as he pointed to the cameras. The crowd cheered, “Now before we begin, please, can we get an introduction, S.A rank and occupation claim from our Proposition and Opposition?” The audience cheered for Kye’s introduction, girls were fawning over him. His piercing yellow, snake like eyes looked over to Demi in confirmation to speak first, but it was more of a warning sign.

“Afternoon Ladies and Gentlemen,” Kye said in a loud and authoritative voice, “I am Kye Fade, I am 26 years old and I wield the Yellow Feathered Snake spirit animal.” As he said that a bright yellow dragon like creature the size of 3 metres circled behind him. “I am also the Vice-president of Sphynx, our lovely city.” He then brought his case forward.

After he finished the MC came to the podium. “Thank you, Mr. Fade. Now to the opposition, Ms. Trace” The MC gestured toward Demi with a sour look on his face that he so desperately tried to conceal.

Demi took a deep breath as she replayed her introduction in her head for the 5th time.

“My name is Demi Trace. I am 21 and reside in the West Rough. I work as a mineral refiner and my spirit animal is unknown.”

Murmurs of disbelief and disappointment surfaced from the crowd. Not knowing your own S.A was unheard of, yet she spoke with conviction.

“Mr. Fade, I have a question to start us off. What do you have against people in the Rough, what did they do to you? People from Mystic have been taught from a very young age to treat people from the Rough, or Ruffians, badly. They’ve been taught this for decades and when they questioned the reason for this, they were punished.”

“Well, um, people from the Rough are less capable of contributing to society.” Kye answered trying to sound convincing. Kye ramble on about how Ruffians were unrefined, dirty, and stupid.

When finished the crowd was cheering. Feeling so much pride in their false information. Demi wasn’t angry anymore, no, absolutely boiling with rage. The fact that Kye was saying this was such confidence irritated her even more.

“Alright, thank you Mr Fade. Now to Miss. Trace for the rebuttal.”

“Fine, that’s how you want to play so be it. Let’s start with your statement of rough people are incapable. I will have you know the people from the Rough are such hard-workers. People from the Rough execute your ideas with precision, yet we still get mistreated.”

“People from the Rough or just as capable and intelligent as people from the Mystic. The reason... we don’t rely on our Spirit Animals. We are strong and independent individuals.”

As she said this a silhouette of a large bird emerged behind her. Her presumed dead Spirit Animal. Its wings spread to around 5m. Thunder clapped and glowed around her and she became more passionate about the topic.

A slow lone clap broke everyone out of their trance. Heads turned to see the masked President himself. Gasps erupted everywhere. No one had seen the president in person before. He was ominous, mysterious, unknown. The president spoke, “I

shall just bury the time of debating and tell you my decision.” Demi could feel her breath hitch, her heart raced rapidly in anticipation, “I hereby annul the proposition law of the destruction of rights of the people residing in the Rough. I choose what is fair and just. The residents of the Rough are long overdue for justice.” I had not spoken up before because people from the Rough hadn’t proved themselves to have fighting spirit.”

Four months after the debate and the residents of the Rough have gotten more funding, discrimination is now frowned upon, parts of the borders are being broken down, and the president has been more vocal about his opinions. Of course, there will be some who oppose this, which resulted in riots and protests near the outer reaches of Mystic.

Their world is not perfect. Most likely it will never be. Perfection is difficult to achieve, maybe even impossible. However, this is a start. A start of something beautiful. ■



Ava Greenough
Year 8 · Aquinas College

POEM OF RESPECT

Marsel Eshaq · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Respect is when we listen to others and
acknowledge what they have done,
respect is when we care for others and show them
love.

Taking things for granted is something that is unjust,
when it comes to respect we should also be kind
to us.

We live in a world that is unjust and unfair,
but our lives right now are anything but despair.
We should take a moment to think how lucky we
are,
and thank the world because we will go far.

Our families and friends are there throughout our
lives,
they will always be there to help us thrive.
They respect us so we show respect to them back,
our families and friends deserve all of that.

Our almighty father, the one and only God,
has been there for us ever since day dot.
He has guided and helped us along the way,
we must seek to respect him until the last day.

The last 'thank you' we should say,
is for the world that we see today.
The world is a place that we all live in,
it is a great place that deserves recognition.

Respect should be incorporated into our lives,
this is the only way that the world strives.
Things need to be done so people care,
things need to be done so there's love in the air.

Respect can be shown by learning small things,
we can all appreciate the blessings it brings.
Giving it is something only we can decide,
what also comes in the way is a thing called pride.

People forget that others have feelings,
being rude and insensitive in their dealings.
Our differences need not lead to yelling,
the way we handle ourselves is quite telling.

Our innocence need not lead to flouting,
but the lack of respect is mounting.
Do we have what it takes to put others first?
Or, are we just going to quench our own thirst?

A thirst for having things our own way,
can prevent making someone else's day.
Should respect be given only when it's deserved?
Or, should we focus on the attention preserved?

We can see thousands live on the frigid concrete,
they lie there shivering with only a slim sheet.
Their clothes are torn and their feet are bare,
many glare but do not care.

We live on our welcoming island home,
where everyone is free to roam.
Chilled, clean refreshing water to drink,
children go to school and are allowed to think.

A solid roof over our heads,
a comfy and cosy cushioned bed.
Warm, wooden floorboards under our feet,
an abundance of food that we can eat.

Many countries are troubled with war,
here, every human is cared for.
Millions die, anguish and suffer,
everyone can thrive and prosper.

Millions are less fortunate than us yet we still
deny,
and refuse to believe every day more people die.
We must respect what we have,
and you should respect all that you have.

We must show respect, and say thank you,
to the people that show respect to us and are true.
We have water, shelter, food, and a warm bed,
we should be grateful that we're alive and not
dead.

Burgers, fries, and shakes we seek,
while families live off one bowl of rice every
week.
Some children walk three miles for a drink,
while we struggle walking to our kitchen sink.

The school that we're enrolled at, the clothes on
our backs,
the presents we receive out of our Christmas
sacks.
These are all great gifts yet we still complain,
We are acting like we're all going insane.

“Show respect, so you are respected” our parents often say,
but it’s not always that easy sometimes our world just feels grey.
Some days you feel like you’ve been trampled,
but wait, let’s take a look at my example.

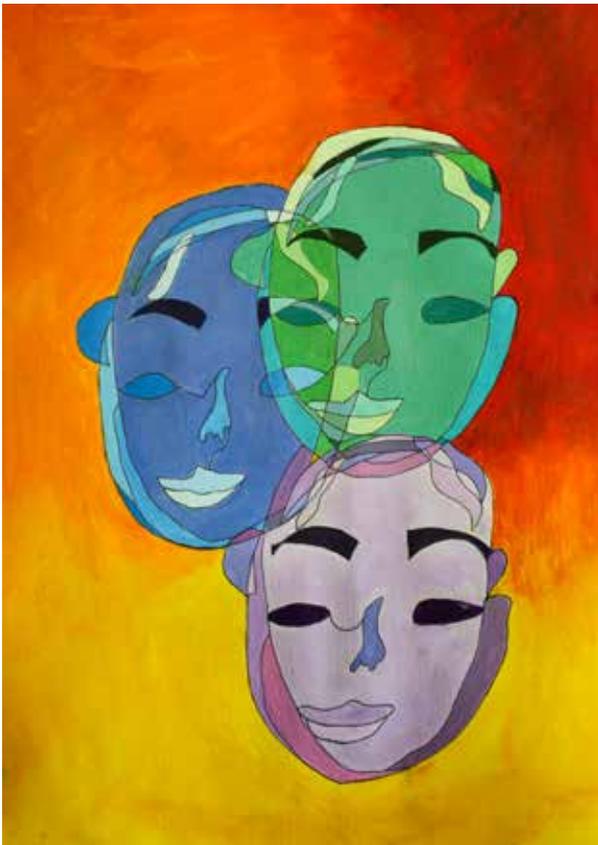
A hardworking girl that I once knew,
who never knew what stood ahead of her as she grew.
Her eyes saw nothing but dreams of fairy tale,
Who never knew ahead of her was life so frail.

With her tender words she won every heart,
but little did she know it was only the start.
And soon in her life darkness struck,
she had no clue how to get out of place where she was stuck.

For the time she got older,
life for her only getting harder.
Today that woman still stands right in front of my eyes,
only trying to make her life right before she dies.

Being respectful is crucial amongst mankind,
giving back and valuing others is the task we have been assigned.

We hope to contribute to shaping our world in a constructive manner,
to be positive and consider long-term actions that will make it all matter. ■



Anastasija Djordjevic
Year 8 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Same, Same

Acrylic on Canvas Paper

In God’s eyes we are all the same.

PARADISE

Nikola Markic · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Paradise. Paradise is how I would have described my town. It was beautiful. There were shamrock green trees, vibrant butterflies and overgrown foliage. It was perfect. Everything was going so well until 'Physey' showed up. It came. It ruined everything. All the insects ran away when they saw it. Plants stopped growing. Ever since it arrived, paradise was not something to describe our town. Paradise was gone, hello darkness.

It all started when I woke up, about to do my daily routine; walk past the withering plants in my front yard, walk by my hungry English bulldog and generally ignore everything I came across. When I stepped outside I realised that the sky was dark and hazy. Opaque smoke surrounded the streets. I thought I was dreaming, my town has never looked anything like this. It was destroyed... most homes were covered with layers of rough rubble.

Then, I observed 'Physey' engulfing the jet black skies outside. I felt uneasy in my splintered plywood home. I gazed strangely at 'Physey' as it chuckled disturbingly and I began to hurry to my worn-out Victorian school to study. When I arrived at school, 'Psyche' blew massive gusts of hazy wind and a breeze of air sent freezing chills down my spine. The lights flickered in my classroom and darkness surrounded us. Some students gasped for air and screams elongated through the hallways.

The school was evacuated and there were many saddening casualties. I decided to visit the local empty beach due to the traumatic experience. The beach had shifting tides, rapidly colliding on rock arches. Sand formed into a tornado and swept me off my feet. Paranoia engulfed me and I felt like I was hallucinating. I decided to sprint home. I wasn't curious about this shadowy entity.

I learnt that if change was to occur I needed to pay attention to and respect the environment I was surrounded by. I filled glasses of water and watered the plants, next I got my cold mac n' cheese and fed it to my Bulldog who squealed in delight. The environment started to respect me back for my contributions. The shadows slowly disappeared and the sky had luminous flares that were beautiful.

I reflected on my life and the troubles I had gone through. I realised that I had never returned favours or spoken to others in a civilized manner. The simple shift in mindset inspired me to do more. I visited my neighbour and paid back her money I had stolen. They thanked me deeply and in inspired me to restore a friendship with my dear friend Susan.

Respect for the environment, animals and the people around me has changed my mindset and 'Physey' was never seen again. Paradise was restored. ■

A TOADSTOOL ROMANCE

Olivia Barisic · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

No taller than a mushroom, Faelyn the elf and Bayberry the fairy ran through the clearing within the forest, carefree. Faelyn's slightly longer legs carried him ever so slightly faster than Bayberry's carried her. He constantly peered over his tiny shoulder to be sure she was still following.

"Faelyn, slow down!" Bayberry exclaimed, between pants. Her white, silk dress flowed delicately against her legs as she tried to keep up with him.

"You're a fairy Bayberry, why don't you just fly!" Faelyn humorously replied, but slowing down nonetheless.

Before long, the two reached one of the larger oak trees in the forest. The sun's rays peeked through the towering branches, shining an enchanting light on the clearing. The chirping of bluebirds and robins played in their ears and the aroma of wet wood and damp moss-filled the air.

Gently, the elf grabbed the fairy's hand and led her towards a bright red toadstool. Faelyn noticed Bayberry's struggle in climbing on top, so he used his strength to lift her up on top with ease. Once she was settled comfortably, Faelyn seated himself beside her.

Bayberry's mind slowly drifted off, and she thought about the elf.

"I wonder if I should tell him..."

"Hm, maybe not now, oh but maybe yes..."

"He probably doesn't even love you in THAT way, Bayberry..."

"Maybe he'll become uncomfortable, I wouldn't want that at all..."

Bayberry just looked up at Faelyn's pale face and sighed. Gosh, she was in love with him.

Neither of them said anything for a while after that. They just enjoyed each other's silent company. Bayberry lightly kicked her legs back and forth beneath her, while Faelyn admired the girl beside him.

He watched her blonde, lengthy hair cascade perfectly down the sides of her blushed face. He eyed her dainty hands, folded softly over each other in her dress covered lap, and he studied the unique shape of the iridescent wings behind her.

He was in love with her.

"B-Berry?" Faelyn stuttered.

"Yes, Fae?" Bayberry looked towards him and spoke in the most delicate of voices. To Faelyn, it sounded like the sweet tinkling of the tiniest bells.

"Can I, can I give something to you? Please?" The elf asked. He looked down shyly and began to play with the tips of his fingers. A gust of wind suddenly blew through the clearing, and Bayberry's scent filled his nose. He seemed to calm down, only slightly.

Bayberry nodded her head softly and gave Faelyn a small smile of reassurance.

Faelyn took Bayberry's hand in his, held it for a moment, feeling delighted by the softness of her skin. He then pulled a folded piece of parchment out of the pocket of his tights and placed it in her hand.

Bayberry gave him a curious glance and opened the piece of parchment.

You are the season of spring,

That melted the cold layers of ice the winter left behind.

You are the reason the wildflowers bloom,

And the reason the oaks regrow their leaves.

You bring the butterflies to my stomach,

And fill my nose with the most delightful smell.

You radiate beauty,

And make the birds want to sing their songs.

You are the season of spring,

That melted the cold layers of my heart the winter left behind.

"Sinclair Snail helped me write it..." Faelyn trailed off and looked away from Bayberry's gleaming, grey eyes out of embarrassment.

Bayberry felt the love she had for the boy beside her intensify. It felt scary and overwhelming, but the feeling of happiness that surged through her was stronger.

So, at that moment without a second thought, she wrapped her arms around Faelyn and nestled her face into the warm crook of his neck. He held her close, his hands cradling the small of her back, beneath her wings.

She's going to say it.

"I love you, Faelyn," Bayberry whispered.

Faelyn gasped, then buried his face in her hair, hiding a smile he's never smiled before. ■



Steve Teves
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Andrew Ling
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Ceramic Sculpture

LAST RESORT

Riley Blackwell-Doran · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

A creative piece based on the novel, 'Diving into Glass' by Caro Llewellyn

*They say pick your poison,
But whoever says you have only one?
Sometimes there is too much pain for only one.*

“Dog.” The words my mother said to me on my wedding day. Back then, I didn't care at all what she thought. I didn't believe her. I didn't want to believe her. As I've grown I've realised my mother knew me better than anybody, come to think of it, yes, I probably would have been happier married to a dog. With a dog comes less responsibility, more freedom, a dog would have given me my life. My life wasn't mine, I used to have independence and freedom unable to be held back by anyone or anything. Then the person I fell in love with, who I thought could make me happy in spite of everyone around me having beliefs turned into a burden. I knew I had to care for him, and he tried his best to make me happy but I couldn't, I was in over my head, I was never going to be happy with Richard. My mother knew that.

What should have been a gift of life, was what brought me closer to death. A child that I couldn't devote my time to, a child that needed love and happiness, but I had none of that. All I had was an empty feeling of helping all those around me but not being able to truly help myself. However, the only way I could do that was to leave. How could I have left a man almost entirely paralysed and two kids? The truth is I couldn't, I had no option and I left myself in my own state of paralysis unable to move, stuck. Richard was physically paralysed but I was so emotionally and mentally paralysed even before the pills and wine.

I had to turn to other means of freedom, I knew that I couldn't get up and leave. Alcohol and pills let me turn away from my life, they let my brain slow, it let me stop. Pills almost made me completely stop, lost in time, I thought that I was better off like that

after each pill I swallowed I thought that I could be happy like that. Then it changed, I knew that I didn't need death, I decided I didn't want it. All I wanted was to stop and find happiness in life, I did not want happiness because of death.

The idea that someone could be happy living the life of taking care of their husband and kids was what angered me. I wasn't jealous that I could be replaced, Becky got me out and I'm thankful for that. I loathe the fact that she was happy. I got replaced by a happy person and Richard let that happen. The day I saw him sitting at the head of the table so proud of all he had, this new girlfriend and two kids better than they had been in a long time. His own happy family, I was simply being used to take care of him, he needed me but didn't want me. I despised Richard for that.

When I got out, when I was free I knew I could no longer stay around. I needed the break, and for the first time in years I felt like I was able to breathe again. No longer drowning in commitments and responsibility, I could take care of myself for a change. I needed that more than anything; change. That's why I changed my name, I needed to find an escape from my past life and be someone new. Someone that could be truly happy.

*Every swallow, every bottle, every pill,
Plunging you further into the abyss of a broken
life.*

*The alcohol the pills they all take over,
More powerful than any one of us,
The body and the soul no longer one,
Too controlled by the powerful substances,
What takes away the pain now empty
The lifeless bottles, knocked over,
Empty,
Run out
As have I. ■*

WOUNDED

Abigail Brooks · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

A creative piece based on the novel, 'Diving into Glass' by Caro Llewellyn

'My parents... were trapped together in an ugly vice of need and unhappiness, which was laid bare when it was just the four of us. The fights intensified. Even so, we never missed our annual family beach holiday (...) Each year we stayed at the same rented house in the small seaside village of Aldinga.'

After Hugh and I returned from the beach, a storm came rolling over the sea.

Huddled under the sill of our bedroom window, we screeched with delight as the thunder rumbled over us. The beams and floorboards of our rented house were made from an old ship's timbers, and they creaked and groaned as the storm closed in as if aching for those dark, wild waves and the glittering prairies of the Atlantic.

It was difficult to hear anything above our pool of sound – not least the smashes coming from the kitchen. We were startled, then, when we glimpsed our mother at the end of the hallway, staring down at the braid of milk leaking steadily from a burst carton on the kitchen tiles. A towel was wrapped around her hair, a Marlboro Red smouldering in her hand.

Hugh said what I was thinking. 'Where is he?'

There was a strange, untouched quiet. She changed the TV channel. Twisted the beads around her throat. Then the outside light turned on, and her pinched face turned green under the fluorescent.

'Oh, God, he's... look at him! He's soaked!'

My mother had some unusual ways of resolving conflict, but this was something else. Hugh was actually laughing in spite of himself. I just stared and stared. I was utterly unmoored by this act, this unbelievable yet almost comically bold denial of sense.

My father sat on the open veranda in the rain, facing us, his dripping hair in a dozen angles off his head. Night had turned the glass into a mirror and he couldn't see us inside, only the creases carved across his cheeks and forehead, and the dozens of spheres of light glowing on the jetty below. I watched my father watch nothing, our bodies standing in the phantom oval of his face, unseeable.

I asked, sobered, 'Are you going to bring him back in?'

The floorboards groaned. She palmed the kitchen bench, examining the sink as though it were a newly unearthed artefact, and I realised suddenly that my brother and I had been effaced from the

world. Then, because I employed memory in order to survive, I was struck suddenly by echoes of our tenuous past: like the time, while snipping green beans over the sink, she murmured to herself, 'What am I doing here?'. The necks of the green beans went on snapping. I imagined a strainer my mother could rinse herself through, until she was clean and whole in that basin, and all the grief was held separate and dripping above.

Are you going to look at us?

The time, when I was five, she had the sudden urge to colour. 'Let's go to Woolworths,' she said one evening. For months, she bent over landscapes of mountains, harbours, Venice, a lone swan on a lake. She pinned them on the dining room walls, where gallery visitors weren't allowed. When I asked my mother why she was colouring, she put down the green pencil and stared vacantly at her half-finished sunflower field. 'I can just go away in it for a while.'

Is that all you're going to do? Just stand there? Are you listening?

The time she blew up on my father after he waited all night for her to come home, watching television under the electric hum of the living room lamp. I listened as she stumbled in at dawn. My father had only begun to point out the stench of vodka in my mother's clothes when she told him, with foggy diction, of her drunk epiphany. 'You know what, Richard? No. No, you hear me out for a minute. Here's what I really want someone in this goddamn world to tell me: what if the heart can't be trusted?'

Is anyone listening?

'What if the heart ushers you away from all those stale common virtues – you know, domesticity, love, connection, all that – and straight towards a blaze of... of wreckage? Collapse? Self-immolation? If there is something unfathomable within you chanting and luring you straight toward the flames, should you look the other way? Plug your ears? Or is it best to hurl yourself headlong into the raging inferno singing your name?'

Nothing in the house seemed to really exist, only the world outside: the thunder and rain and the calls of someone down the coast echoing off the high cliffs. My mother put the kettle on and let the sound of boiling water drown out our voices. She was far away.

Hugh went back into our room, but remarkably, I hadn't forgotten our father. Out on the veranda, I took my place beside him in the unending rain. We looked out at the vast sandstone fist, sunk into the earth, on which the village sat; at the ocean teething at the shore; and those dark storm clouds

that covered even the low ground – bottled up, sweeping, broken off, lost and forgotten.

We are all wounded from time to time. Many wounds, like those of my mother, are the wreck and reckoning of a life misled. Sometimes those wounds are carried from adulthood and on into old age. As for me: does a daughter's grief turn to something else if left unattended? What name do I have for that grief?

Mother? ■

ROSION, THE GODDESS OF GRATITUDE

Mia Abordi · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Growing up, Rosis was known for her beauty, however she did not ever appreciate it. Her strict parents would rarely allow her to look into a mirror because they were worried that Rosis would let her elegance empower her. None of them even thought about gratitude.

When she was growing up, she one day found a small mirror plastered to a tree in the woods on her way to high school. She knew she wasn't allowed to, but she found herself stopping to admire her appearance every day. Slowly she began picking out certain flaws in her face that seemed as though they had appeared overnight. Once she returned home she would let her pretty red hair cover her face and go to her room.

Day by day, as she got closer to the mirror, she found herself looking at a tired, ugly grandmother. She was confused as to how this had happened so fast. She pressed her frail finger against the glass mirror, stroking her cold, unrecognisable face. It shattered.

Rosis was so shocked and embarrassed that she decided she could never be seen like this again.

From then to now Rosis walks along the streets, alone during the day before returning to her small abandoned cottage in the woods. She looks upon the children walking to school and at times is forced to use her powers on them. These let her vary how people see themselves. Rosis can make people's attractive features more and more obvious until they recognise and love them.

If they are unable to appreciate themselves at all after a certain period of time, they will suddenly turn to bugs, and find themselves crawling all the way to Rosis' cottage where they will stay and eventually rot.

All that remains of Rosis's beauty is her luscious red hair that is kept hidden in a hood for no one to ever see. To the rest of the town she is just the creepy old lady who watches everyone go to school in the morning, but little do they know ... ■

FOR I AM RESPECTFUL AND GENTLE IN HEART

Renée Duncombe · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

“What does this mean?” people say
Some tell it's a type of romance, others tell it's a
message from God.
But listen carefully for what I'm about to tell
today
For at the end, he too, will applaud.

God has given each and everyone a heart
To keep us alive and express emotion.
We protect it all the way from the start
Sometimes we let it out in the open.

The best two qualities for it are rest and peace
As it leaves no room for anger, stress and other
negativity
Why? Because it will make us feel a decrease
Therefore, these two are enough.

However, the negative somehow make it through
We feel hurt and pain.
You know what I'm saying is true
As they are easy to gain.

The emotions are just all over the place
We don't know what we are feeling right now.
So we let out tears come falling down our face
And ask ourselves with a question starting with
“how”.

So, don't be stressed
It's not too late to start.

Hand it over to God
Soon you'll be gentle and respectful in heart.

So, what does this part mean
To you, it seems they would just fade away.
We can try to move on with our lives
Let us go on with our day.

When actually we gave them to God
He is the one who handles our negativity.
So, we can leave them behind and enjoy our lives
And have fun with our daily activity.

We give it to God as he doesn't want to see us be
down
He wants everyone to be respectful and kind to
themselves,

Let us humans enjoy around our town
God would never be apart.

Therefore, if you're feeling negative
It's not too late to start.

Hand it over to God
Soon you'll be gentle and respectful in heart.

And if you see anyone feel hopeless
I know it takes a while.

But tell them
“Chin up, look straight ahead and don't forget to
smile”. ■

GIVING BACK

Valmira Dzelan · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Distressed, I walked through the shopping aisles while steadily picking out my items. All I could think about was the weak, elderly patient, Denny, who I had just disclosed the devastating news of having a very rare form of cancer that was expected to kill him in a couple of weeks.

As I exited the store, I noticed a man handing money to a homeless man who was shivering on the ground. To my disbelief, that person was Denny. While having trouble breathing and barely standing, he was still going through his wallet, giving the poor man all the money he had on him. I was in shock. After receiving the life changing news that would cost him thousands of dollars to fund with his cancer management, he was still willing to help people while sharing his money

“Denny!” I called out. He tilted his head up and gave me a cheerful smile. He slowly made his way towards me, after hugging the emotional homeless man.

“What are you doing?” I asked him, still in surprised at what I saw.

“Doctor, having cancer won't stop me from helping the ones in need. I want to spend my last weeks on earth giving to the people that need it.” He replied softly.

“But you can hardly stand, you should be in bed resting.” I answered.

“I want to leave this world knowing I helped change someone's life, I can't do that if I'm in bed. Don't you get it? I've given my stress and pain to God so I can live the last of my life freely. As it is written in the bible, 'For I am gentle and humble in heart. The least I would do to show how much I respect God and what he's done for me, through giving back.'”

He stared at me with pure kindness. He was still willing to help people, even after being aware he was going to die soon. It made me realise that people should be kind and selfless no matter what, despite any given circumstances. I put my bags down and gave him a hug.

“Let's go around and give the food I purchased to any homeless person.” I tell him.

Denny looks at my full trolley and forms a large smile across his face.

I wanted to show him how much I respected him and what he was doing. So, we walked around slowly, handing out the food one by one, while clinging elbows as I helped him try to stay up. ■

RESPECT POEM

Brieyanney Lay · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Somewhere in Australia there are designer products brought in for incineration.

Whilst there are homeless elderly living on the streets as the chilly winter wind whips their arthritic joints.

Poverty is the blackened toenails of the out worker, heart compressing with each breath.

It is the lullaby of a mother snuggling for warmth in a rusty old car at night.

Some are confined to a life, hunched over in factory plants, lifeless and suicidal.

The only way to enact social change is to close up the cracks we have fallen into.

Reach out and give a hand, lend a shoulder to cry on, open up your ears, bow down and praise the Lord.

Give hope where it is needed, it will be reciprocated in return.

Show the respect to our neighbour, show the respect every human life deserves. ■

RESPECT POEM

Shayla Trejo · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

I am respectful and I assist all

I am kind for I help others

Those who are big and small

I love all as if they are my brothers

To be humble I may be less prideful

I take care of my neighbours, knowing what they go through

I know how those live and for that I am mindful

I am someone who helps, I'm there for them to look up to

I show respect to those around me

And stay true to honour their boundaries

I am genuine to their opinions even if I disagree

I will acknowledge them even for centuries

I do not look down upon my friends for what they may have done

No matter the circumstances, no matter how long

I love all and I'm there to help them one by one

I have been here all along

I am modest as well as honest

And I treat all as if I've known them from the start

I will be fair and act right as I have promised

For I am gentle and humble at heart ■



Owen Johnston
Year 10 · Xavier College

THE SATURDAY ROUTINE

Jessie Rowe · Year 12 · Star of the Sea College



My dad is a man of routine. I first noticed this when I was eight, watching him get a coffee every morning without fail from the local Orange Pekoe cafe. He is the kind of guy that simply walks through the doors of the cafe and before greeting them, the baristas will already be making his three-quarter strength, extra hot cappuccino, or “Michael’s usual,” as it was otherwise known.

The visit to the Farmer’s Market every Saturday at 10 a.m. came to be another addition to the weekly routine, after moving into our third house in London. The market was just a five-minute walk away, and lay in the heart of the village, Barnes.

This was an outing that mostly just my sister, Dad and myself took part in. After a busy week of school and work, it was something to always look forward to.

I came to memorise the layout of the place like the back of my hand, as it was split into three very distinct sections. The first being for the ‘old people’, full of cheeses, oils and wine – a very bland area to browse for a nine-year-old and her eleven year old sister. Then there was the meat and fish section, which was quickly bypassed in order to get to the real reason we came every week. In here, were the only stalls that truly mattered to

me as a nine-year-old. In particular, the cupcake stand. Although always an unrealistic dream, these meticulously decorated cupcakes lay at the forefront of my mind for the entirety of the week, but it was mostly always a “no” from Dad, as he quickly redirected me. The few times it was a “yes”, I seem to remember Mum being present – she’s always been easier to persuade.

However, Dad’s treat to Molly and I was hot chocolates and sushi, equally as exciting. For some strange reason, the very plain cucumber sushi I got every week, reminded me of Australia and the food we ate there. It was the small things like this, making me feel closer to home.

The Farmer’s Market trip in itself was always meant to be very quick, however it often stretched out, as every second person seemed to be a friend or familiar face. This was the beauty of Barnes, with such a small population, everyone knew everyone, and was genuinely pleased to see each other out and about.

It is a stereotypical trait of Londoners to be cold and detached people, but from our five years of living in Barnes, this was far from the case.

With our sushi in hand, we would find a place to sit on one of the benches around the pond. It was a serene place, despite the number of

young kids that would be running around it, precariously close to the water's edge. The water was always unaffected by the wind, uninviting but still a calm and relaxing sight. Ducks entered and exited the water as they pleased, providing a form of entertainment for us as we sat observing their spontaneous behaviours. The white swans were scarcely scattered around, elegant creatures but silent assassins, as I had to find out the hard way, being bitten by one after innocently trying to feed it a chocolate chip cookie one morning.

Green foliage and reeds were largely present, surrounding the pond in dense patches, dancing calmly in the wind. I seem to remember these mornings as being sunny and bright, a rare sight for England yes, but nonetheless true. The air was always crisp, stinging the ends of our noses and fingertips, with a smell of fresh trees and moss, somehow reminding me of Australian springs.

As a kid I was always chatting, but on these Saturday mornings by the pond, sometimes we

would just sit there. Being next to each other was enough. I knew that moments like this were special, especially after Dad got sick. Although I had very little understanding of the situation at the time, I remember sitting there, just a year on from his surgery, knowing that family would always be the most important thing in my life.

There was something therapeutic about these mornings, leaving me with a feeling of warmth, but sometimes, my heart aches, ever so slightly. Although I didn't realise it at the time, because as a kid you only ever really live in the present, I would be thinking back to moments like this, just wanting to go back.

I would do anything to return to being that nine-year-old on the park bench with her sister and Dad.

No worries.

Just a tray of sushi in one hand, and a hot chocolate in the other. ■

WINGS

Grace Gillies · Year 9 · John Paul College

I dare you to tell me,
I cannot spread my wings.
I dare you to come close,
I won't run anymore.

My footsteps are now thunderous,
Trees crumble at my feet.
The sun is scared,
I'm not the girl you remember.

I'm more than just a woman,
And I am no longer mortal.
I'm a power to be reckoned with,
And I'm not scared anymore.

I am powerful,
I am strong.
My wings will spread,
And I will soar. ■

CRESTING WAVES

Isabel Dureau · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Again and again and again.
They crash against the shore with a deafening boom, leaving no time to think, to breathe.

Calm,

I tell myself.

The cresting waves beat against the cliffs, their greedy claws continuously trying to mar the solid surface. I tightly wrap my arms around myself, trying to warm my body. The sodden sand beneath me makes me shiver with cold, and my face is damp from the salty sea mist that hovers in the icy air. I gaze at the ominous clouds of cinereal gray that blankets the once blue sky, blotting out the colour all the way to the sharp horizon. I focus my attention back on the ocean.

My gaze is held by the piercing swells as they reach their treacherous climax, building in height, like a titan rising from a crouch. As they reach the heavens they curl and crash down on the rocky cliffs with unearthly strength.

I shut my eyes on the impact, the deafening *BOOM* ringing in my ears.

How quickly the storm came on, overtaking the calm tide, stealing the ocean's quiet. Once peaceful, now anger and violence.

Waves. Unfailingly persistent, powerful.

How similar to unwanted thought, I pondered to myself with curiosity. Again I watch the ominous swells. On and on they crash, incessant drowning out hope and faith. Drowning the quiet, shredding the peace that existed on the rocky beach and in my mind. The roiling waves are an embodiment of the power of self-forged negativity, the ongoing thoughts of doubt.

No, not just unwanted thoughts. Insecurity. Absence of love for one's self.

It is something that has crept up on you, trapped you unaware, and held you captive for a long while. Too long.

I shuddered at the comparison.

I felt my forehead crease in frustration. I didn't want the reminder of my own troubles, my own negativity. I know what these feelings represent. I have been a captive.

Deceiving myself.

I wasn't good enough, smart enough, strong enough. Telling myself that I would never be like the intelligent go-getters I read about in novels,

never be as timelessly beautiful as the supermodels who I watched in awe on flashing screens.

Slowly, my world had become a simple routine. Look at others. Compare them to myself, my achievement, my appearance, my personality. Try and change myself. And when that didn't free me...I sank into my own ocean of misery.

I hated being reminded of it. That I was helpless to the negativity that enslaved my mind. I wanted to feel at peace and ignore the problems that I was so blatantly avoiding. I was worried that there would be too much hurt in the process of healing. I was scared.

I unwrapped my arms from my legs and swiveled to lay on my back.

The raggedy jumper that I had worn almost every day for the last three months was saturated by the biting cold sand beneath me. I am barely aware of the cold, it was just like another one of the numb and throbbing pains that I have been living with. I stare at the sky, a myriad of swirling ash and dove. I close my eyes and try to fall into the mundane quiet. But there was still something there, deep inside of me. A small spark. Barely warm, barely noticeable, but still there. Through all the turbulence, I struggle to understand it. But it holds tight and won't let go.

I awake, a warm breeze tickling my nose. I slowly open my eyes, blinking against the radiating sunlight that falls from above me. I don't know how long I had been asleep.

The sky, now a vibrant dome painted with the brightest shades of blue, streaked with fine clouds of pale marble. The sand glistened in the sunlight, and the rocky cliffs stood out in their hues of deep smoke and onyx.

But the most beautiful of all was the sea. What was a dark roiling storm before was now a placid ocean of the brightest turquoise. The soft sway of the undulating surface mesmerizes me, I gasp as the sun casts the water like lapis. How quickly it has changed. How quickly anger and hatred has been replaced by peace and happiness. Clear and blue.

What did this mean? Could my negativity be overtaken by something...sweeter? Like happiness, or content. Would the pain of accepting my hurt be worth it if I was able to find something that would bring back happiness into my life?

All the things I could enjoy...friendship, family,

myself. I knew that my journey would not be as simple as a change of weather. Would a long and hard process of self-acceptance be bearable if there was a prize at the end?

As I continued to stare at the triumphant blue, multi-faceted water, I knew my answer.

My shoulders set in an unyielding resolve.

I will not be a slave to my unhappiness. Never again would my fear hold me back. Resilience. Whether I stood by myself or with others I knew I would heal. I would recover. No matter how long it took, no matter how many tears I shed, I would fight for the happiness I deserved. The happiness I

so desperately wanted. No wave would cripple or drown me. No storm would push me back fleeing. I would find self, my beautiful ocean of hope and love.

I push up from the sand and walk to the ever-changing sea.

I feel it. I recognise that warm spark. It was there all along. The hope. It was my determination to fight. The foundation of my resilience which always existed. I just had to know how to ignite that fuel.

I swim. ■

THE LIGHT AT THE END OF THE TUNNEL

Emma Peluso · Year 8 · *Star of the Sea College*

Dear future child/children,
Times are hard for everyone right now. Going to the supermarket with my Mum is the highlight of my week now, since there is nowhere else to go. Staying positive is hard, but I refuse to let COVID 19 beat me. I reorganize my room every day, as a way to deal with the boredom of isolation. I went through my box of special things today, and it brought me great joy. I recalled happier times when I looked at my treasures and keepsakes. A strong sense of longing for last year fills my heart along with the nostalgia I feel as I sift through my box. All I want is to leap forward to a time when this virus is a lesser concern.

I sat on the couch, taking my freedom for granted and watched the news on a Sunday night. I wasn't at all concerned when the reporters talked about COVID-19. "It's just like a cold, and Australia's an island nation anyway. We'll be fine." That's what my Mum said to me at the time. I had a debate with my family at Friday night dinner the next week. "People are saying that this might just become a global pandemic!" That was what my aunty was saying. I didn't believe her one bit. I was completely oblivious to the fact that this virus would change the world just a few months down the track.

I didn't realise that it would get this bad. I brushed off this new virus like it was nothing, but now I'm starting to feel it's suffocating presence. Schools are emptying out, and every day, another classmate doesn't come into the classroom. A gloomy feeling accompanies the news now, and the fear of not knowing what comes next is eating away at many people. The days are starting to lose their edge, becoming more and more alike. I'm starting to lose track of time as I try to fill the empty void that is

boredom and anxiety. I tell myself that this will all be over soon to try and cope with these emotions, but I feel like I'm making empty promises to myself. Sometimes I just pretend that I'm somewhere else, where sickness does not occur. That's why I'm thankful for my strong imagination. Sometimes you need more than the real world to help you deal with things like this.

When will it end? I just want this to be over. They say that good things come to those who wait, but I don't want to wait anymore. I'm tired. Tired of checking the internet every day for a new vaccine – for hope. But these things take time. A lot of time. By the time that you, my beloved children are reading this, it will all be over. The world will find the resilience to overcome COVID-19, and contact with other people will not sound so strange to me. Resilience is something that everyone needs right now.

"Don't look at the glass half empty or half full. Be grateful that you had a glass at all." I heard this from a very influential person in my life, and I believe that this phrase has particular meaning in this situation. We should appreciate the fact that we can still connect with others through devices and applications. We truly are privileged to even have access to things like these, as many in the world go without.

As I sit at my desk, the afternoon light filters through my curtains and spills out into my room. I wonder if this light signifies the end of all of the tragedy – "The light at the end of the tunnel". If there is one thing that I want you to take away from this piece, and these times in general – it's that instead of seeing a challenge as a reason to stop trying, see it as a reason to start. Just remember that if something is going to happen, and you truly can't control it, you may as well enjoy it. ■



Teagan Marcin
Year 9 · John Paul College

Same but Different

We come in all different shapes and sizes
but are still beautiful inside and out.

CINDERELLA - A CHANGE STORY

Sophie Clark · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

It's always her. Always her with her silky blonde hair and her pretty blue eyes. Always her with her cute little nose and her perfect clear skin. Always her with her quirky little jokes and millions of friends. It's always her.

It didn't used to be though. Before her, mother and father adored me. Treasured me. I was their pride and joy. But, of course, she came along and just ruined *everything*.

'Oh darling, you know I would, but your sister's got a recital and-'

'Oh sweetheart, I want nothing more than to come, but your sister has already asked me to-'

It's *always* her.

My children will never feel that. That neglect, that discomfort, that pain that came with growing up next to someone who was 'born to be a star'. They'll know I love them. They'll know that they matter most. They'll always know. I'll make sure of it.

I found a husband. He wasn't the nicest of fellows, but he would do just fine. He worked hard, put food on the table, and, most importantly, gave me two little girls who I still love more than anything.

He died. It wasn't a shock, he had been sick for a while, but it broke our family for a bit.

I fixed it though. Always do. Found a nice, rich

man who obviously loved me. Unfortunately, he died too. Just after our marriage. A tragedy, really.

It left me with *her*.

She's the spitting image of my sister. Perfect hair, perfect skin, perfect body, perfect eyes, perfect smile. She's the perfect girl. The perfect daughter.

And I won't stand for it.

My girls will not fall second to *her*. Not like I had to.

So, she's become our maid. We've taken up to calling her 'Cinderella', quite a fitting name for someone who is now constantly covered in the grime and dirt of our house.

And she's done quite well in accepting it too.

Of course, I'd never tell her that, as if I would give her the privilege, but she's taken up the role with pride.

And, of course, now my girls are in the spotlight. They're so beautiful, really. Ambitious too. They know what they want and they get it. Just like their mother.

I've shown them their worth and Cinderella had simply been a liability in letting them know it. I know that I did what I had to do and I know I did it well.

It will always be them. Them over everything. My girls. ■

EARNING RESPECT

Mackenzie Kelly · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Respect is like trust, hard to gain, easy to lose.
When I know that I am respected, I can obtain
everyone's attention –
But still some choose
To turn their back but I feel encouraged by those
who don't,
From those who include.

Respect is bright as the sun
If we can't respect another
How are we meant to expect respect?
If we can't show someone that we're listening to
them
How are we meant to listen, when you didn't
listen at all? ■



Sara Clarke
Year 8 · John Paul College

Se stesso rispetto

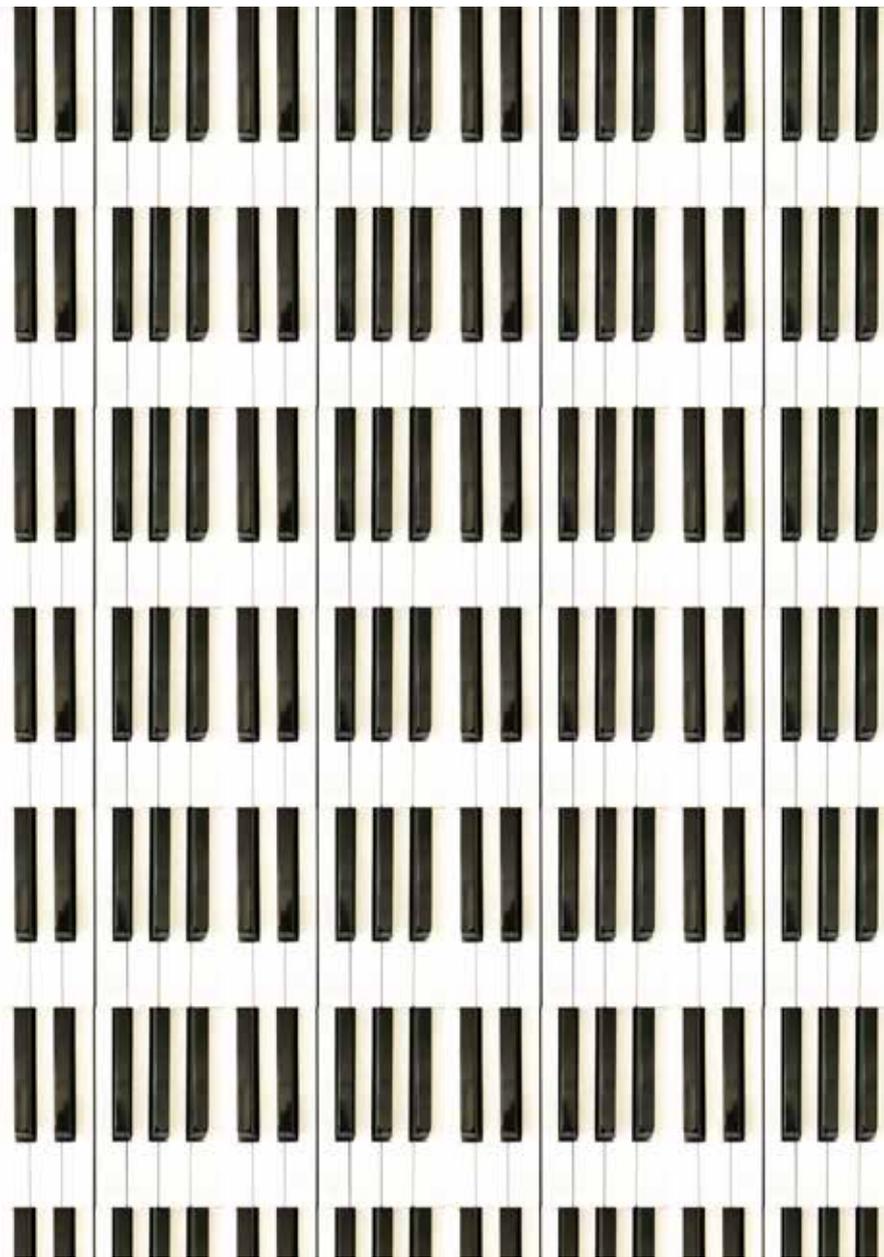
You do not have an ego if you have self-respect. You do not love yourself if you have self-respect; it means you believe in yourself and nothing else.



Chloe Boric
Year 10 · Nazareth College



Disha Anchan
Year 11 · Nazareth College



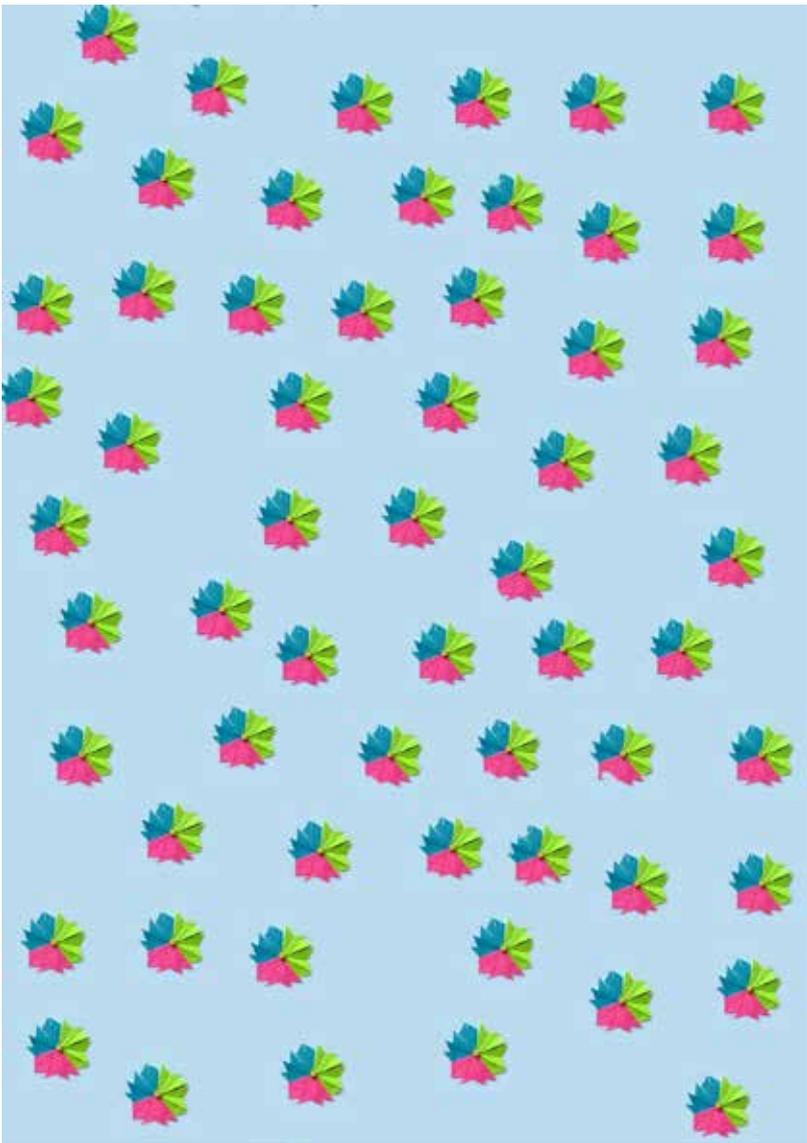
William Allen
Year 9 · Xavier College



Lochie Friedli
Year 9 · Xavier College



Lachie Hollamby
Year 9 · Xavier College





Jack Jenkins
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

Buried History

My theme for this semester was 'Beneath the Surface'. In this artwork, I took a literal approach to that idea. This artwork represents how many cultures of the world have fallen victim to colonisation and invasion, and their land re-branded. I chose this artwork because I feel that these great cultures go unrecognised and the injustice they faced should be recorded.



Thomas Butler
 Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Stubborn Enlightenment

‘*Stubborn Enlightenment*’ characterises the tendency society has in becoming absorbed by the stresses and strains of life, allowing it to plague their actions, body language, free will and self-expression. In life at times, seeing is believing. My piece showcases this experience showing a theatre full of corporate slaves, who are realising first-hand; the importance of creating balance in life and making that conscious decision to do things for yourself. I think by learning about finding an equilibrium not only emancipated me from my intense stress, but it also dramatically improved my sense of belonging in the incredibly misleading maze of life.



Joseph Petrowski
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

With Open Eyes

This artwork represents being opened mind with global issues. The orange and reds depict a protest, this protest symbolises both power and anger by the people. This protest is set within a grey monotone concrete city that is cold and cramped. The watercolour is used to display change and beauty as the acrylic paint is used to create a cold, flat but textured cityscape. The people of the protest are seeking for change as they have 'Open Eyes'.



Kieran Shek
Year 9 · Whitefriars College

Present Future

My main idea for this artwork was to make people realise; that if we don't respect nature in the present, then it will die in the future.

A NEW PERSPECTIVE

Taylah Magee · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Cars are lit ablaze and are burnt to ash across the crowded highways, as people swarm in various directions. The sun blares across the tops of the large cardboard signs held overhead, that block any possible view of the sky. Others are discarded, littering the sidewalks. The screeching of tires against the burning asphalt road and sirens wailing in the near distance is almost deafening.

My eyes try to adjust to this chaotic scene, but instead begin to cloud over. I am unsure if this is a result of the flickering flames of fire, or indeed tears, plummeting from my face to the scorching ground, that will be hidden in a matter of moments by the hundreds of pounding footsteps soon to follow. I'm carried within a strong current and shoved around with those who too, are marching for justice. I gasp for air but am invaded by smoke that spreads across a place that was once of civil interaction.

As I pan my view across the swarming crowds, who are all expected to be here for the same reason, motives appear truly erratic. Screams and cries for help echo across the vast roads but are silenced over alarms ringing and glass shattering, as those who violently push their way through the thousands of people, invade private property, unimpeded. Police vehicles speed to the scene, defending themselves against those who feel it necessary to attack. At these moments of anger and determination, people feel that a stereotype is valid.

Faces are uncovered and the crowds grow denser, illness spreading from the faintest touch. Packed

groups are carried with the heavy flow of those marching. Blue and red lights flash and sirens roar along the crammed roads as protesters haul themselves at these vehicles. Gunshots can be heard all around the area and families huddle together tightly, protecting one another.

My eyes tear away from the blazing highway set out before me and move towards a street nearby, so close, yet so far away. My eyes widen and I feel my body ease slightly as I see people wearing masks and holding reverent signs. They march together in unity, protesting respectfully for equality and justice, comforting those around them.

This is a perspective of these current events that previously, I hadn't pondered about. I now truly understand that there is indeed a very moving side to these protests; one that is hidden from those caught up in the violence and people watching from afar.

Over the course of isolation, I have had a lot of time to watch the news and develop an understanding of what is happening in the world. Amidst this global pandemic, Black Lives Matter protests have also been a major event, worldwide. I have been moved by Black Lives Matter and wanted to reflect my understanding and thoughts in my writing. I also wanted to display that there are two perspectives: violent protests which are mainly shown in the news and peaceful protests which are usually kept hidden. ■

THE 2020 PANDEMIC

Mietta Ackland · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Life won't be the same again,
The world's an altered place.
From things we took for granted
Like Talking face to face.

It all happened so quickly
It changed so much, so fast
The life I knew was different—
Different from the past.

A virus and pandemic;
No-one thought they'd see,
“Stay at home” restrictions
And social distancing.

Virtual family meetings
By skype or telephone
Brought us all together
And made us less alone.

A sudden rush to panic buy
Masks and sanitiser

And toilet paper shortages
Made us more the wiser.

Helping out our neighbours
Became second nature.
The elderly, the vulnerable
Our friends as well as strangers.

Amidst the fear and misery
We celebrated those
Such as doctors and nurses
All the healthcare heroes

And the Musicians and artists
Who, whenever we were bored,
Inspired us creatively
Through music, songs and stories

Across the time of quarantine,
We gained valuable insight
About ourselves and others,
About positivity and might.

I'm grateful for the lessons
Which circumstance has taught,
What i've learned and what I've
lost

In the battle we have fought.

But there are things I took
granted

Things that I will now miss.
I have grown up as a person,
And will forever reminisce.

On that year called 2020,
The one with tests and trials,
The one I never thought I'd see
The one that went for miles.

The one that I'll remember
From now until the day
I'll turn around and think about,
What I had to say. ■

THE BLACK NIGHT

Amelie Payne · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

It was a quiet as the stilling silence in a horror
movie
Tension dripped out from under our seats and
down the sides of the couch
The clock ticked, no one moved
It was as dark as hell itself
The air felt like a coffin, squeezing the life out of
us until there was no oxygen left...
The cold was getting to me, twisting its way
around my legs
My teeth chattered as loudly as those creepy
wind-up toys

The walls of our house looked like big gaping
holes, ready to swallow me
Suddenly the moon cast a bright ray of light
through the window
I was relieved to have some light
Until I realised what type of moon it was
A full moon
My brother howled
He sounded like, exactly like,
A wolf
I backed away tripping over my fear
His face... ■

A ROSE AMONGST THE THORNS

Beth Mandile · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

This piece is a narrative written about the state of humanity during the earlier stages of COVID-19. It is set in Bayside, Victoria, and through the eyes of two main characters, it depicts how a little bit of kindness in a great deal of chaos can make an even bigger difference to people's lives. It is also an exaggerated version of the way humans naturally react in 'end of the world' seeming situations, with the piece talking about issues like racism and our natural urge to blame other people and things over ourselves.

The year 2020 was one of humanity's darkest. With a pandemic sweeping the globe, single-handedly shutting organisations, locking down countries and killing the vulnerable, there was nowhere for anyone to hide.

Deep in the beachside suburbs of Melbourne's South-East, a Coles supermarket was in chaos. Marianne Jones, a mother of three, entered the packed, stuffy shop, and began frantically pushing her trolley down the 'Household Items' aisle.

Mr Clem Taylor, the owner of *Captain Stevie's*, a local cafe, was already there, however, stocking up on his store's supply. He was still wearing his white chef's apron, but it was covered in stains of coffee, and he seemed to have strange scratches and bruises all over his arms, most likely from the journey past the bustling checkout.

"Afternoon, Mari," He said, chipper as usual. Marianne smiled in return, but just as Clem placed his big, grubby hand on the last eight-pack of toilet paper, Marianne was already there, gripping it tight.

"Sorry, Clem, but I'll be taking this." She said, snatching it out of his hands.

"Oh come on now, Marianne! I was here first." He said, chuckling.

"Look, you're a nice bloke, but this is a matter of life and death."

Clem's eyes scrunched up in laughter at first, but when he saw Marianne's stern stare, he frowned. "Mari, just hand over the toilet paper!"

He reached out to snatch it away, tensed and ready to knock her out if necessary. However, Marianne Jones was already halfway down the aisle, pushing her trolley at full speed.

"I have kids, you must understand. I'm sorry!" She yelled.

It was only then that Marianne noticed the angry crowd of shoppers at her end of the aisle. Shouting and chanting, they were blocking off her exit.

"I can't give it to you! Get out of the way, please. This is for my family!" She cried.

She started to panic, seeing the sharp tip of a pitchfork.

"Crikey, you've all gone mad! I'm sorry, I can't give it to you!" Marianne was backed into the shelf, with fifty people circling her like sharks and queueing up all the way outside the aisle.

"Just hand it over!" They continued to chant and yell.

One man came almost close enough to stab Marianne with a rake.

"Let's not make this more difficult than it has to be!"

Marianne was just about to be sliced in half when everyone went silent.

A loud coughing fit was echoing off the walls. Slowly, everyone turned to face the front of the supermarket.

Timothy Harper was standing at the self-checkout with his hand over his mouth, coughing violently. Other than the cough, he looked perfectly normal, with his young face glowing and wet hair shining. He was wearing a bright blue shirt over some sea-soaked board shorts.

Aside from this, his parents were both Chinese, and though he was a citizen of Australia, most people assumed he was from Asia.

Timothy's fiancé Eloise Johnson was dressed in a smart pantsuit and had just finished checking out a loaf of bread and some milk.

"You alright, darl?" She asked Timothy, who was a deer in headlights in front of the murderous crowd.

"Crikey, it's chock-a-block out here! Let's go-" She gasped, seeing her brother

Ned Johnson at the front of the crowd, holding a garden rake who's prongs were sharpened to needle-points.

"Ned?" She stared in horror. Ned grinned slyly, looking to his rake.

"When did you get a mullet?!"

Her brother gasped with shock and ran his hand through his thick, crimped hair. "Uh...please don't tell Mum!"

Eloise rolled her eyes and focused on the rake in his hand.

Ned's look of fear instantly changed back to an intimidating scowl.

“Jim, have you got the Coronavirus?” He said, turning from Eloise to Timothy.

Timothy clenched his fists but decided to try and defuse the tension.

“No, I’ve got VB virus.” He chuckled nervously. No one else laughed.

People began to shout,

“If you’re sick, get a ride back to China before you get anyone else ill!”

“Been eating any bat soup lately, Jim?”

“Go back to where you came from!”

The crowd began to file out, muttering under their breaths and carrying their heavy supplies. Parents began pulling their children away from the couple and throwing Jim dirty looks.

“Okay, this has got to be some kind of misunderstanding, guys,”

Eloise said, her voice shaking as she eyed the pitchforks. “My Jim has asthma, most of you know that. He ain’t got COVID-19.”

Eloise was looking through the crowd of faces for any expression of recognition or empathy, but all she could see were angry shoppers, covering their mouths and grabbing face masks on the way out. A couple of children were pulling their shirts over their noses and glowering at Timothy and Eloise.

“Come on El,” Jim said, glaring at the rest of the people racing out. “Let’s get out of here.”

Eloise wiped a tear from her cheek,

“Don’t listen to ‘em, Jim. They don’t know what they’re saying.”

“Oh,” Jim murmured, walking out, “they do.”

Marianne picked up her bags and, after tidying the shelves again she ran across the street and threw the toilet paper pack into her boot.

Had she really nearly died over a pack of toilet paper? It was hard to believe, but there was no time to think. She had to leave as soon as she could before anyone tried to take the precious rolls from her again. After shutting the boot door, she got into her Jeep and took the keys out of her bag. She couldn’t wait to triumph in her success and rant to her husband about the ridiculousness of it all.

Above all of her anxiety and primal instincts, though, she felt guilt.

As she turned the car key, her eyes were drawn to a lone man in front of the supermarket. His eyes were glazed over, and his features were diminished by the many wrinkles crowding his face. The clothes he had on looked crinkly and hastily put on. He was leaning on his walking stick like it was a lifeline.

A feeling of pity and tenderness came over Marianne, and she decided to go against all her instincts and judgement. She needed to make up for the wrong she did against Clem.

Climbing out of her car and crossing the street again, she found the senior with his arm wrapped around a tall, young man. She jogged over to see that it was Timothy Harper, with one arm supporting the old man and the other linked with Eloise Johnson’s.

“Excuse me,” Marianne panted, “please, have this.” She handed the old man the pack of toilet paper. The senior smiled brightly and shook her hand with gratitude.

Marianne turned to Timothy as they continued walking on to the car park.

“Jim, I’m sorry for what happened earlier. I should have done something.”

“No, Mari,” Jim assured her, smiling, “they would have killed you.”

The thought of that was so absurd that Marianne could have laughed, but she didn’t for the sake of Jim, Eloise and the unknown man. Who was he, anyway?

She turned to look past Timothy where the man would have been, but he was gone.

“What happened to that fellow you were helping?” She asked.

Eloise and Timothy both seemed confused. Jim hadn’t noticed the man leave. They had just reached the parking lot, and after a minute of searching around the place, the trio gave up and began walking down an alleyway and onto the main road, where they had parked their cars.

“That’s weird,” Eloise muttered. She still seemed pretty shaken up from the incident in the supermarket.

“Did you catch his name?” Marianne asked.

Just at that moment, something from the bustling crowd outside the alley caught her eye. Marianne

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turned towards the swarm of busy pedestrians pushing and shoving, not bothering to socially distance, focusing only on their own needs.

Just a few metres away from her, though, Marianne saw Clem Taylor and the old man shaking hands, both of them smiling cheerfully, with an eight-pack of toilet paper under Clem's arm.

At first, Marianne felt a surge of anger and surprise. She had sacrificed herself to give the man that toilet paper! But then the old man looked her in the eye and beamed, and she felt herself grinning too.

For all the misfortunes the world was facing, there was always kindness in the hearts of people. While no one was perfect, all it took for someone to express selflessness was to be inspired by the unselfish act of another.

"Are you coming, Mari?" Timothy asked, breaking Marianne's train of thought.

She caught up to the pair and continued walking with them.

"I just saw that man give the toilet rolls to Clem Taylor!"

Eloise raised her eyebrows, "How incredible. I suppose *Captain Stevie's* would need them."

"The rolls had quite a journey, didn't they? They went from Clem, to me, to the man and back to Clem. It's like a trail of kindness." Marianne responded in happy awe.

Meanwhile, out of sight, Ned Johnson harassed another shopper with a pitchfork, a trolley was turned over, and more people yelled and screamed like hyenas scavenging for any last scrap of food.

"A human act of selflessness during a time like this," Jim said, "It's like kindness amongst the chaos, isn't it? The rose amongst the thorns."

The three people continued their journey down the path, laughing and enjoying the last bit of hope they'd just been given for the rest of the year. ■

TWO SIDES OF THE SAME COIN

Tilly Fleming · Year 7 · *Star of the Sea College*

I am homeless. Poor. You are not. You are rich. I am homeless. Unpopular. You are not. But you're still my friend.

We couldn't be more different, but we couldn't be better friends. Like shadow and light, we are opposites, but always together. I see you walking down the pavement, your high heels pounding the city streets, your fancy scarf billowing in the cool breeze. You see me sitting on the streets, old clothes, and a beaten sign.

We walked together into a shop. People stare. They don't realize I can see them, but I can. You realize it too, and you glare stubbornly back, while I cast my eyes downwards. We leave the shop eventually with a single pen.

The letters on my old sign have changed now, and I show it proudly when we are seen together: *Two sides of the same coin.* ■

WORDS

Chinelo Umealu · Year 8 · *Star of the Sea College*

The end of day bell rings through the hallway. She walks to my desk. “Want to go to Church Street?”

As we’re waiting by the train station, she sits down, and pats the ground next to her. I hesitate, but quickly push any anxious thoughts out of my head. Friends aren’t nervous around friends. “Did you get your new phone yet?”

Or when they place their hand on your arm. I really hope I don’t look flustered.

“No.” I say. “I would have texted you if I did.” I watch the train approaching in the distance.

I was thinking of telling her sometime soon.

We sway with the movement of the train. Through the faded windows, I can see a blur of shrubbery and the graffiti-covered metro. I know I’m barely a teenager, but sometimes I feel like time is moving like that. Rushing past me in a blur, like it’s in a hurry to get somewhere. I almost forget to get off at our stop.

It’s a bit colder than I thought it would be. I can imagine my favourite bright yellow winter coat draped forlornly over the hanger by the door. I look up and see that she’s well ahead of me, already halfway down the block, and maintaining a quick pace.

“Hurry up, will you!” From this distance, I can see the sunlight cling to the edges of her messy ponytail, and I have to stop myself from staring.

“Which class do you have first tomorrow?”

I wonder what she would do if I told her now. I think that she might be the type of person who wouldn’t stop being friends with me because of it. It would be awkward, though. Maybe she feels the same. Maybe she would screw up her face. Or laugh in mine.

“I have Art.”

“Aren’t you doing sculptural design? I wish my Art class was doing something that interesting.”

“Yeah, well, there’s a final assessment, and let me tell you, I definitely won’t be the next Michelangelo.”

Her grin widens. We’re walking closer now, our hands are very nearly almost touching, and I don’t know how I’m ever going to keep such a big secret when my stomach is doing backflips.

We’ve walked all the way to the park, and my face hurts from laughing.

It’s scattered with foliage and dozens of towering trees. The council must trim the lower branches though, because none of them are very climbable. We walk side by side on the gravel footpath as it crunches in reply to our messy footsteps, our bags heavy with homework and junk food we bought from the shops earlier.

I wonder if she can already tell. Maybe she’s laughing in her head. Maybe, she’s told all her friends about how pathetic I am, pining after her. I can see, in my mind’s eye, her relaying our conversations to our schoolmates, as they chuckle at how gullible and oblivious I am.

She laughs and shuffles a bit closer to me on the park bench. She’s a good actress.

If I did tell her, it could ruin our friendship. Maybe she would never talk to me, ever again.

But then she does another one of her smiles and I feel like absolutely everything in the world doesn’t really matter anymore. I try to block out all the worries in my head. It’s tricky, but I try.

“Hey, I um...I like you.” ■

LEFTOVERS

Nicholas Pham · Year 9 · Mazenod College

A man walks up his stairs and into his room. Another day goes past. Another day with no profit. He kisses his wife and kids goodnight, turns off the light and lies in bed. Fear and worry course through his mind. He tosses and turns, thinking about the future of his business and his family. He tries to remember the last time he received a notification on his order system. He can't. He checks the clock. It's 2 am. It didn't matter if he had enough sleep anyway, there was practically no work to be done the next day. He sits up and looks over to his unknowing children, snoring peacefully. He lies back down and eventually falls asleep, an empty feeling in his stomach.

An alarm sounds. The man sits up, his hair ruffled and messy. He gets out of bed and prepares himself for the day. He walks down the stairs, puts on his apron and starts cutting up his ingredients. After he finishes, he sits himself down at the counter. The man waits... and waits... and waits. He checks the time. It's been almost 5 hours since the shop has opened, and not a single order has come through. The man sighs, and goes back to checking his messages. This is normal. Suddenly, his phone vibrates. Rubbing his eyes and checking that he isn't crazy, he checks and double checks the notification. It can't be real. Who on Earth would order 3 large-size family packs? They're called family packs for a reason. Either way the man gets to work, making his way to the kitchen and trying to wake up his numb legs. As he is about to finish cooking the huge meal, another notification comes up. And another. And another. The man doesn't even bother to check, passing it off as a glitch in the system.

A single woman comes in to pick up the huge order.

"Party?" the man asks.

"Not with the regulations," the woman responds.

"Sharing?" the man inquires.

"No," replies the woman with a smile, and walks off.

The man stands there, puzzled. Passing her off as a big eater, he goes back to his kitchen and decides to check his seemingly hundreds of notifications. All of them are asking for huge amounts of food. The man goes back to the kitchen, sweating profusely. When was the last time this happened, the man thinks, when we first opened? After an hour, the customers and delivery drivers begin pouring

in. He gives each customer their food, and after almost two dozen people have passed through the restaurant there were only a few left. The man has a small rest, and roughly estimates the money he made in his head. It was enough to pay rent, and a lot more.

Finally, there is only one customer in the restaurant, a lady. The man brings out her order and hands it to her; she receives it with a small grin.

"Quite a few orders today?" the lady asks.

"More than a few," the man responds, "this is the first time in a long time I've had so many."

"Well, it's all part of the plan," the lady says.

"Plan? What plan?" the man asks.

"Haven't you heard? There's a new trend on Instagram," the woman replies, "anyway, I have to go, have a nice day!"

The man bids her farewell, and as soon as she steps outside the restaurant he immediately rushes up the stairs. His children shout that they are in their online classes, but he doesn't stop. The man turns on his laptop and opens up Instagram for probably the third time ever in his life, and on the front page he sees:

Leftover Chicken 3 Ways #LeftoversChallenge

Easy and Healthy Meals Made with Leftovers (Fundraiser) #LeftoversChallenge

Leftover Food Hacks (Fundraiser) #LeftoversChallenge

The man sits there shocked, jaw wide open. He reads the caption of one of the posts, which says:

Restaurant workers have always been there for us. They've worked late nights, long hours and holidays away from their families. It's time to return the favour. Due to the recent outbreak of COVID-19, many restaurant workers have lost their jobs or had their pay drastically cut. This is our challenge to you: if you can afford it, order more food than you can eat from your favourite local restaurant. Keep your leftovers, and make the most creative dish possible. Take a photo of it and upload it to social media with the hashtag #LeftoversChallenge. Let's all help our local workers. Good luck!

The man smiles, and leaves a comment on the post: *Thank you.* ■

ISOLATION

Alexander Tsipos · Year 9 · Mazenod College

I woke up this morning feeling cold and blue, longing for something more to be part of my life. Roaming the rooms of my shoebox apartment was all that I did, for I had no job to do, and nobody to waste my hours. When I walked to my fridge, finding it empty was a pleasant surprise as it meant I would have a chance to leave my house. Finally.

The shops were completely empty, with very few items decorating its shelves. Picking up the things that I needed proved to be quite difficult with the limited stock, but I managed, and headed to the register. As I was walking, an elderly couple near me looked rather puzzled wandering through the aisles. I felt a surge of sympathy. Dropping all my things at the counter, I ran back through the store and picked up some more essential supplies. I returned with my extra items, paid for my things, and went back home.

I left some boxes of dried goods and fresh vegetables at the door of my neighbour and returned back to my apartment and boring life. Hours passed as I tried to figure something that would spark joy in my monotonous life. However, I was unsuccessful in every way. At nine in the evening, when the sun began to set, I started to hear noises coming from outside. I stepped onto the balcony and the sounds of clapping and cheering filled the air. My heart filled with joy and I clapped as well. I realised the essential workers who we were clapping for, were doing everything they could to help us through these difficult times, while I was moping around regretting my uneventful life. As the clapping died down, I walked back into my apartment to find a rolled up note slipped under my doorstep. It read: Thank-you. It was from the elderly couple who lived next door, the people who I gave my spare groceries to. This moment made me think as I went to sleep for the night. This is what these troublesome times bring out in us. They bring us together and champion our respect for one another. ■

LIGHT FROM DARKNESS

Juliet Gattuso · Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School

Do you mean to be intimidating?
Do you find it hard concentrating?
When you're looking right at me!
You may think that you're cool and that you rule,
Even though deep down you know,
this is not the way to go, you persist.
You give no sympathy, show no empathy.
You may think I'm pathetic but at least I am
empathetic.
My eyes hold back tears, a tsunami of fears.
As you drag me in, I feel that I am thin, you've
stripped me, I am a string.
While you grow into a boulder like thing.
You hold all the power as you sit there and
devour; my thoughts, my mind and someday all
of mankind.
As you continue to devour my tears are a shower.
I live in misery as you intimidate me. I just sit
back and spectate and let it all happen. I am too
weak to stand up for myself as I look up at you
sitting on the very top shelf.
I live in gloom, this will be my doom.
Bid farewell to rainbows and bright skies. Sit back
as humanity dies.
People will no longer be humane, for you will
drive them all insane.
You are too powerful to be contained and I sit
here getting drained.
I am stumbling in sorrow like there is no
tomorrow.
The sky is a black and red stain that shows my
agonising pain.
My head is a swirling hurricane. I am choking on
rain and drowning in grief.
I lay on my back and took my last glance up at

the sky and closed my eyes, thinking it was
over. Suddenly a blinding light broke through
the thick dark blur of the petrifying sky. I felt a
warm energy flow through my trembling body.
I was glowing and warm.
I am now as free as a bumblebee and you will
never ever again control me. I am no longer
afraid of you no matter what you do. I know
your weak point, for I have found something
which you lack and now I will fight back.
It didn't take long to get back to the strong, old
me. Then all of a sudden the sky began to clear.
I will shed not one more tear. The new me is
calm and collected for now I am protected. For
the way I fought, you ought to know that I will
forgive you. If only you started to show a little
respect.
Show me respect and we could become the best of
friends, fighting together at the toughest bends.
Did you know that we will strive for more than
just when we are alive?
A friendship that will last from one lifetime and
into another.
We will love like the dove that is the holy spirit,
can you hear it?
I might sound absurd like a headless bird, but
I'll forgive you and you can wear a new pair
of shoes, shoes of kindness, gratitude and...
respect.
Now am I Intimidating? I think not. I'm still not
that hot but who cares about looks? Together
we could write books, we could be famous!
We could travel the world on dirt paths and
gravel.
We could do anything and everything!
All I'm asking for is RESPECT ■

TEARING US APART

Eva Benkovic · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

COVID-19 is tearing us apart,
but we need to stay strong and fight it together.
Being separated may be the difficult part,
but it's not going to be this way forever.

There are many things we can do as a community,
We can show thoughtfulness, kindness and
respect.
Let's work together with this opportunity,
To make it a time that we will never forget.

If you catch this horrible virus, stay at home,
let someone else get your weekly supplies.
Don't go around talking on your phone,
It's not such a big compromise!

Always, always follow your countries rules,
And if you do, it will make a great change.
It might stop everything unfair and cruel,
But at the start it might feel a bit strange.

Social distance, the minimum is 1.5 meters,
I know it's hard with family to keep apart.
Then you can go to school to see your teachers,
And have fun with friends with all your heart.

I've learnt a lot during this scary year,
The difference it makes if everyone does their
part.
Thinking about how to not live in fear,
And waiting for the year 2020 to finally restart! ■

RESPECT YOURSELF

Lucas Britten · Year 4 · St Finbar's Primary School

You should always respect yourself. Be kind to yourself, love yourself, believe in yourself and do your best. Look after yourself by drinking water, staying active and being fit. Be true to yourself and be the best you can be. Respect yourself as much as you can.

It is very important to respect others at all times. Be a good friend, don't be jealous of others and be kind and considerate to your friends. Look after the elderly and assist them when they need help. Honour your parents, listen to others even if their opinion is different to yours and treat people as you would like to be treated. Treat everyone equally and with kindness

The environment deserves everybody's respect. We should not litter to keep our beaches, parks and countries clean. We need to be sustainable in our lives. We need to make sure the school is clean and tidy and we look after our belongings. If we look after our environment we will save lots of animals and we will be living in a better world. ■

RESPECT

Michael Friedli · Year 4 · St Finbar's Primary School

I am different.
I am unique.

You are different.
You are unique.

I want to be seen.
I see you.

I want to be heard.
I hear you.

I need help.
How can I help you?

We are different.
We are the same. ■

RESPECT YOURSELF

Aaryav Deshpande · Year 4 · St Finbar's Primary School

Respecting yourself is really important. If you don't respect yourself then how do you expect others to respect you. It also means believing in yourself and accepting yourself as who you are. You must stand up for yourself and not worry about what others think about you or your beliefs. To me respect also means respecting your body. You can do this by eating nutritious food, drinking enough water, staying active and so on. Respecting yourself is very important in life.

Respecting others is as important as respecting yourself. Respecting others means accepting others for who they are even if they are different from you and have different ideas. Have regards for another's feelings, wishes and goals so they can

achieve them. You can respect others by being honest, keeping your promises, accepting your mistakes and making amends. You should always treat others the way you want to be treated.

It is crucial to respect the environment. We are part of the same ecosystem which means we depend on each other for survival. There are various ways to look after our environment like minimizing the use of cars, using eco-friendly cars, not littering, using the right bins for your garbage and composting. We should make an effort towards a sustainable life by reusing and recycling as much as we can. All these little steps to look after our earth will lead to a happier planet. ■

RESPECT IN NATURE

Jemima Walia
Year 2 · St Finbar's Primary School

Rejoice and respect every moment in nature.
Earth gives us life so we need to keep it safe from harm.
Sustain the environment by picking up litter, recycling your rubbish and not wasting water.
Prevent pollution by walking, bike riding or running.
Evaluate the way you live so that you can live more sustainably.
Care for those people who have no money or food.
Treat people, animals and nature the way you want to be treated. ■

FOUNDATION OF OUR SOCIETY

William Schlittler
Year 6 · St Finbar's Primary School

Respect is a really important foundation of our society. Even more now that we are experiencing a worldwide pandemic. We have to respect the rules that have been set even though we may not like them. We have to respect the people that have supported us and most importantly we have to respect our heroes, the medical staff who are working tirelessly to keep us safe. ■

LUCY

Kyra Clark · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

Everyday Lucy comes home upset and sometimes cries. Her Mum wonders why she is so upset all the time. Lucy never had the guts to tell her mum what's going on. Lucy is a shy girl, she only really hangs out with one group of friends, the MEAN girls. The mean girls, Jacky, Bella and Carlotta disrespect Lucy and she has been told by the teachers and all of the nice people to branch out.

It was the first day of year 6 and Lucy was extremely nervous. She didn't know what to expect, and her mum was very worried about her.

"Lucy!" Called her mum "Your Lunch is ready!"

"Coming!" Lucy responded as she acted happily even though she was a bit upset about today. Lucy was walking to school when suddenly she got a nudge to her right. She jumped and saw a new looking girl walking beside her. She must have been new to the school.

"Hey!" yelled the girl.

"Oh um hi" Lucy responded looking quite unsure.

"What's your name?"

"My name is Lucy, and yours is?"

"My name is Maddy but you can call me Mads."

For once Lucy felt happy, she was excited to see what could come out of this.

It was lunch time and Lucy felt nervous walking into the cafeteria, she didn't know where the

mean girls would be. Lucy sat down with her new friend, when... she got a tap on her shoulder. She turned around to see the mean girls all standing in a triangle shape, with their arms crossed. "Hiiii Lucy!" Said Bella in a sarcastic voice, "I thought you were going to sit with us?"

"Yeahh, I thought you were going to sit with us," said both Carlotta and Jacky backing Bella up.

"Lucy," whispered Maddy "Why are they being so mean to you?"

The mean girls walked back to their table and started a gossip 'session'. Lucy took a while to answer, "Oh they just don't like me I guess." Lucy sighed. Maddy was the only one that respected Lucy and accepted her for who she was.

At 3:30pm Lucy was walking out of the school grounds. "Hi Mum," Lucy said quickly "This is my new friend Maddy, can she come over for a sleepover tonight?"

"Oh as long as it's okay with Maddy's mum,"

Maddy replied "Yep I already texted her and she said that it was okay!"

"Alright hop in!"

Lucy was feeling so happy, happier than ever before. She has always remembered a thing that her grandfather used to say, "True friends respect you. They accept you for who you are. They don't turn against you." Lucy knew that something great would happen! ■



Abbey Cooper
Foundation · St Finbar's Primary School

Salt Dough Unicorn

RESPECT

Alex Marinis · Year 8 · Salesian College Chadstone

The moonlight penetrated through the thick forest canopy, and splintered over the leaf ridden floor. The trees around me swayed with the warm gentle breeze. Leaves on the forest floor rustled throughout the quiet night. As the moon made its way through the sky like a clock counting hours, the sun drifted lazily upwards, tingeing the sky a warm purple. Baby birds chirped throughout the still summer morning, their harsh cries for food reverberated off the thick bark of the trees. I stood tall and watched the area around me. The other trees stretched their branches wide with low sweeping motions. Squirrels scurried across the forest floor, leaving leaves fluttering down to the floor in their wake. The days that went past became distant memories lost in time. Seasons changed quickly, and with them we did too.

One day, in Spring, silent whispering of voices snaked through the forest like wisps of fog. The sun stood proud, high in the sky above. A glimmer of light shone spectacularly on the other side of the forest. It steadily grew larger each minute until it winked away in a bright flash. Two men emerged from behind the large trunk of a tree. They bypassed me with a huff, and continued to trudge along their path, propping their gleaming oversized tools higher on their shoulders. I watched them as they continued on their way, before they stopped abruptly before a small tree. They debated their options, and, after deciding on their course of action, tore off their jackets with a sudden violence and threw them to the ground with disregard, dislodging leaves from their once peaceful resting place. They elevated their weapons high above their heads steadily. They then brought their weapons down swiftly, sending chips of wood from the small tree flying in every which direction. In a steady and methodical pace, their axes came down and slashed at the side of the small tree, leaving a gaping void in its place. The little tree groaned under the stress, but held steady, persisting through the impossible situation. Small acorns crashed to the ground, sending small puffs of dirt particles hanging still in the air.

Soon after, the two men fell to the ground, exhausted, leaving an enormous gash around the trees side. They sat, gingerly taking sips from a canteen as they discussed a new plan of attack

to take down the opposing tree. They stood up groggily from their resting spot, and picked up their axes once again. It was horrific yet mesmerizing to watch, something so cruelly beautiful it was hard to ignore. One of the two men brandished a large rope from his belt. Try after try they failed, but eventually, they looped the lasso over the small tip of the tree. It was a game of tug of war between the men and the tree, as the men pulled, the tree moaned and resisted the growing urge to collapse. With one great heave, the tree gave into the men and collapsed, crashing to the forest floor, sending a plume of dirt and leaves into the air, hanging still. All that was left of the young tree was a dwarf like stump protruding from the ground. The Death bringers massacred what was left of the once tree and then lumbered away from the dense forest, holding the dismembered tree above their heads like a trophy. They made many trips to make sure that there was no evidence of their presence once they left. The only evidence that the tree existed was a small stump.

Months now seemed like years. The birds no longer sang their songs in the still mornings, which every tree now dreaded... for that was when the Death bringers came. The squirrels now cowered in their hollow trees in fear of the Death bringers. The sun no longer shone, but instead burned with a fury filled rage. The trees around me fell with thunderous crashes throughout time. The once vibrant and nature filled landscape was now dull, and desolate. The sun floated low in the sky, the air still and thick, there was no noise signalling that the Death bringers were coming. Their weapons of genocide reflected the light harshly. They walked straight towards me and I knew it was my turn to face them. They removed their jackets unceremoniously and lifted their weapons, preparing to swing. Abruptly, they stopped. One of the men reached up into a low hanging branch and removed a bird's nest. Delicately, they set down the nest on another nearby tree... before turning around to face me again. As they did so, I caught a glimmer in one of the man's eyes, and saw the sorrow within his grim expression. They picked up their tools and began to work again. I stared without focus at the nest which they had spared, and felt the pain of my slow coming death. ■



Remy Puidokas
Year 10 · Salesian College Chadstone



Lochlain Keleher
Year 7 · Salesian College Chadstone

THE EARTHQUAKE

Ronit Rehal · Year 8 · Salesian College Chadstone

The strong, biting breeze accompanied the heavy rain which panged on to the concrete floor like bullets from heaven. The blaring whistles from the vigorous winds alarmed the city. It was a frigid, Tuesday morning. Umbrellas were crammed together like a flock of seagulls. My eyes slowly revealed themselves, as I lay in the dead of sleep, wrapped around a thick, white bed sheet like a sausage roll. I looked to my left, peering at the dark grey clouds which covered all of the sky. I admired the immaculate white walls of my apartment, which complemented the modern grey furniture around me. It was stunning, yet quite uninviting. I steadily got up from the comfort of my bed, and welcomed the day.

I changed into a white shirt, which was underneath a thick, black coat which I would wear to work. My smooth, black boots glistened in the gleaming lights of the apartment's downlights. I reached over to a silver wristband which laid on a black, marble table beside me. The wristband gleamed as always, as I admired the two-cross star which shined upon its band. As I placed it on my wrist, I smiled. I read the wording at the bottom of the band. It read 'respect'. I had been given this wristband when I was just six years old from my father a few seconds before he died.

My father always told me that respect was a two-way street. If you wanted to get it you had to give it. I remember the last time I saw him. He was on a hospital bed, weak and tired, when he used his final breath to tell me to be respectful, and used his final movement to pass me his wristband. I remember promising him that I would live up to his expectations, and just like that, he was gone. Forever. I never forgot that moment. As I tied it up, I picked up my bag and umbrella, leaving the apartment, into the elevator. I pressed the button which read "Ground Floor", and looked into the mirror of the lift, adjusting the white collar of my shirt, and fixing my hair. As I opened up my umbrella and walked outside, the powerful winds immediately hit me, as I joined the crowd of the morning rush.

The loud pitter-patters from the rain alarmed me, along with the smell cigarette smoke around me. I looked up to see the murky darkness from the clouds above me, as I trudged on the concrete flooring beneath me. All of a sudden, a deafening smash, similar to the sound of thunder, erupted throughout the city. I shifted my attention towards the scene, gasping as I looked around, confused.

It happened again. This time louder. People gasped. People screamed. What was it? My eyes widened, as my palms began to sweat. The horde of people in the city looked distressed, walking at a faster pace, clenching their fists. Then it happened. The ground beneath me shook, leaving people on the floor as chaos erupted all around. An earthquake was coming. Terror broke out all around the city, as everyone began to run, searching for safety. My heart was racing, as my elbows bent inwards, petrified. I started to sweat, as my eyeballs flickered around the area, unable to comprehend what was happening. The hotel building beside me came alive like an angry animal who had just found its prey. It lurched one way and the other like an uncontrollable beast, rumbling and groaning as it lost balance and smashed on to the ground, leaving destruction behind. The screeching of metal around me accompanied the thuds of more buildings collapsing. Glass shattered from skyscrapers, causing even more mayhem as it fell on to the concrete floor of the city.

Panic squeezed the breath from me, as I sprinted, looking for shelter as something heavy crashed near my head. My heart dropped, as did my jaw. I began to accept my fate. Was it all over? I spotted a large group of wooden tables in a café, with several people hiding underneath them, safe from the havoc. I hurtled to join them, safely making it underneath the last table. I watched even more buildings fall on to one another, clanging like two airplanes colliding. Everyone had seemed to find a place that they deemed safe from the earthquake. Everyone, except one. A young 8-year-old boy stood crying as he watched the city break down. Many watched him suffer, but none acted. I looked down for a second, and thought of my father. That child probably had a mother who would feel tremendous grief if her child died, just like I did with my father. I looked up, clenched my fists, and charged through the disaster to collect the child. My heart panged, as I carried him, on my way to take him to shelter. As I got to the table, I gently placed him under, safe from the chaos. He was still crying, overcome with emotion, but a lot calmer now. As I positioned him under the table, I heard something above me. Something large, screeching as it descended from above. It was a large, heavy part of a building. I looked up, and accepted my fate. It finally landed, straight on to my head as I fell unconscious, on to the concrete floor. A shining, silver piece of jewellery slipped from my hand, in front of the boy as it happened. It was the wristband, with the words 'respect' pointing towards the boy as he collected it. ■

KEVIN RUDD'S APOLOGY WAS NOT ENOUGH TO SATISFY THE INJUSTICES OF THE STOLEN GENERATIONS

Kai Dubaich · Year 9 · Aquinas College

February 13 2008.

Prime Minister Kevin Rudd stands, takes his place at the podium, and shuffles his feet. He takes one breath and looks up at the eyes staring back at him. He then delivers a speech that forces tears out of the Indigenous Australians, and empowers those who have now opened their eyes to a beautiful culture that existed long before they have, they do this because sorry is a powerful word. Sorry for the years of suffering and harm the First Australians were inflicted with when they were forcibly removed from their parents.

Descendants of the Indigenous Australians are overwhelmed with heartfelt emotion, because this speech would be the start of a reconciliation between past and present Australians. And what did the Government do after this apology?

Nothing.

To make matters worse, Rudd stated in his speech that 'the time has come for the nation to turn a new page in history and right wrongs from the past', when clearly, nothing ever since the speech took place has happened. Why would the Australian Government say this, but not even make a slight effort to improve the living conditions of the current Indigenous Australians. Kevin Rudd's apology was not enough to satisfy the injustices of the Stolen Generation, and if you read between the lines of the so called 'speech that moved the nation' you find the lies.

'Shaping the next chapter in the history of this great country, Australia.'

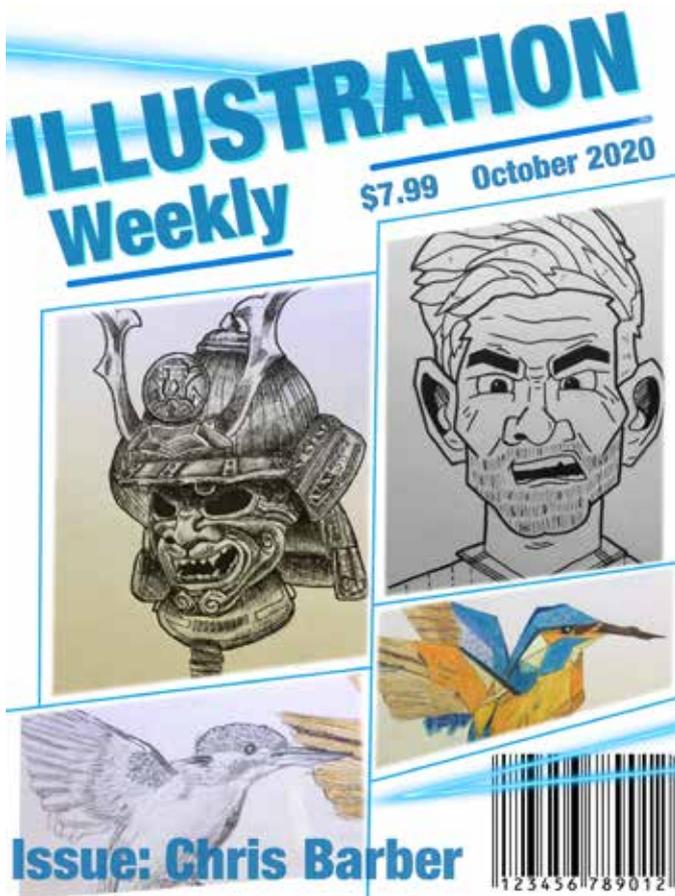
Imagine being one of the Indigenous Australians, whose life was shredded to pieces by the terrors of the Stolen Generations, hearing this from the Government. You would be overjoyed. And yet, out of the 520,350 indigenous descendants, all 520,350 were left without 'the next chapter.' After waiting nearly 40 years for an official apology, these descendants of the First Australians are left waiting again. So why hasn't the Australian Government taken the next step towards reconciliation? Ian Hamm, victim of the Stolen Generation and President of the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF) simply stated that the 2008 apology was just a 'list of facts' and went on to describe the apology as just 'The sky is blue, the grass is green, this happened, and we are

going to do something.' Hamm mentioned that the apology was the foundation for reconciliation, but now just unfinished business. This proves that Indigenous Australians also do not believe that the apology was enough to satisfy the injustices of the Stolen Generations, and the apology itself was not good enough.

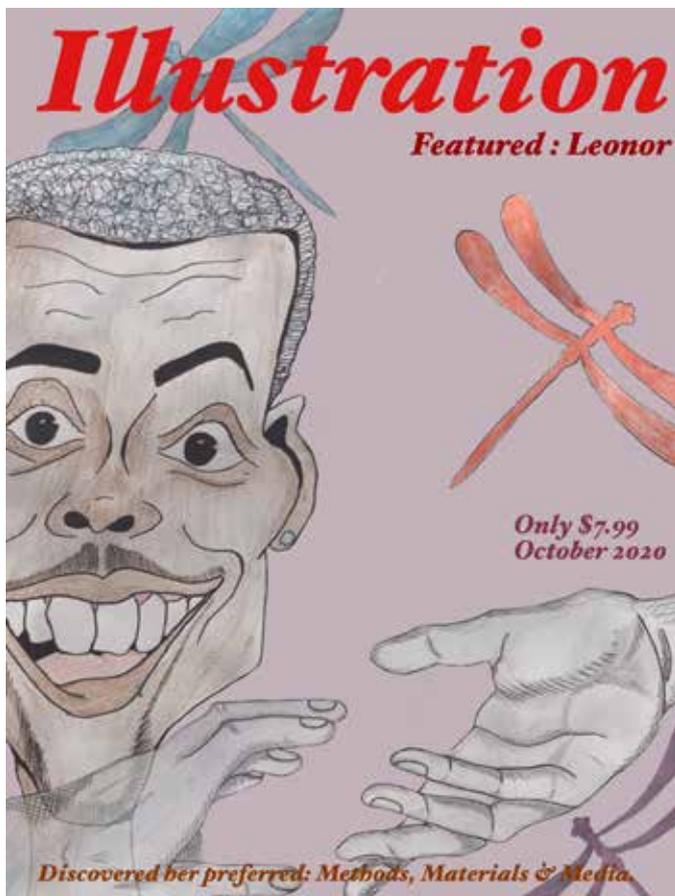
The Stolen Generations have traumatised over 100,000 Indigenous Australian children, and has often left them mentally unstable, many with impaired health and social abilities. The Stolen Generations have left many Indigenous Australians ashamed of a culture they have been celebrating for over 50,000 years, something past and present governments should be embarrassed of. The Stolen Generations have caused Trauma so severe, it has been passed down to the next generation, as they live afraid among a 75% percent white Australia. 10 years on from the apology and half a century after the Stolen Generations, and the Australian Government has not even bothered to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are living in decrepit conditions.

If the Australian Government refuses to support and change the lives of these Indigenous Australians, then we as a nation can make a push for these changes ourselves. A great way we can lay the next brick to reconciliation, is by having a public holiday where we celebrate Indigenous Australian culture, but also acknowledge and remember the suffering they went through during the awful Stolen Generations. This is a perfect idea to iron out tensions and relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and the current Australians and is a great way to create awareness on the beautiful culture that is Aboriginal Australia.

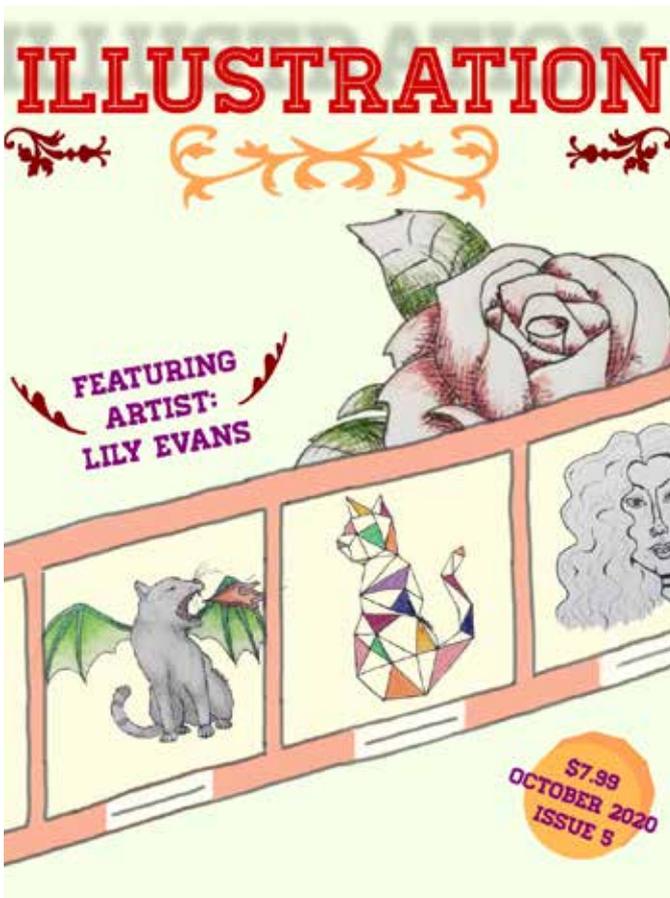
As one nation we need to finish what Kevin Rudd started in Parliament House in 2008, and unite to support the Indigenous Australians that were left scarred by the Stolen Generations. As the Black Lives Matter campaign takes place in the world, we as Australia should take the time and reflect on how we can assist those Indigenous Australians who are struggling to make a living both in urban and remote areas, as One Country, One Nation. ■



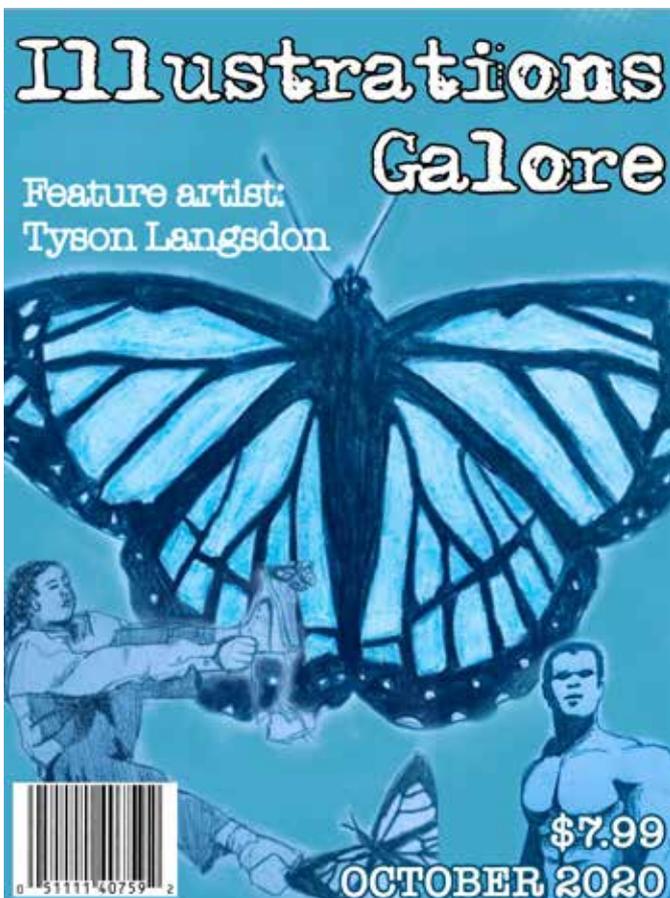
Chris Barber
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Leonor Fernandes
Year 9 · Aquinas College



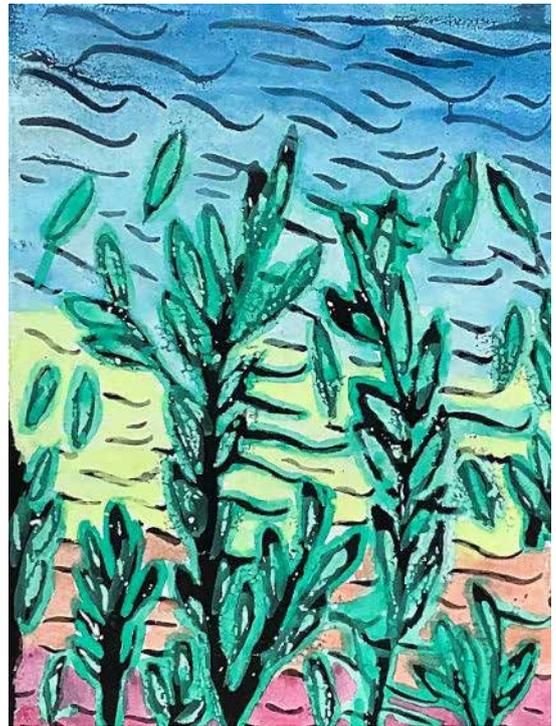
Lily Evans
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Tyson Langsdon
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Jemimah Lees
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Ruth Tawng
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Annabel Ireland
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Alyssa Martin
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Olivia Clark
Year 9 · Aquinas College

FROM LEBANON TO AUSTRALIA AND THEN HOME

Jessica El-Mouallem · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

It was just a normal Friday, off to Port Melbourne to get fish and chips before going home to watch the footy. I sat at the back with my Jidi. We laughed about my day at school, I remember being so grateful he was back home. That's the last vivid memory out of hospital I have. For the next two to three years it will become a whirlwind of hospital visits and unkept promises of coming home: Cabrini, Alfred Hospital, Saint Vincent's.

All blurred into one memory.

The car just kept moving further and further away. They couldn't see me waving from the window any more. This is when all the goodbyes turned into confusion.

"I just don't get it. They all left me. Why would he want to be buried back home, in Lebanon? I'm scared of planes. I told him that. He knew"

I couldn't believe it. The man I looked up to most was gone. This man is my grandfather, my Jidi, as we say in Lebanese. His name is Fred.

Jidi Fred moved to Australia from Lebanon when he was only eight. He arrived with his parents, grandparents and siblings on a boat. As an 8-year-old, I was very disconnected from the importance of my heritage. That same girl found herself crying over the fact that her Jidi was being buried back home; now she was able to understand why.



The passport photo.

The boat was a place where connections were made, although it seemed as though they were so far from home, people they met along the way soon became family, making Australia seem like a familiar place.

The boat represented new beginnings not only for

him but his whole family, it was like a magic carpet waiting to take them to a whole new world. All the way from a small village called Amouine to the seemingly big suburb of Northcote.

My grandfather moved here when he was only eight. I was the same age when he passed away. I had the support of my whole family, but still couldn't cope. I still can't comprehend how he was so strong at such a young age to move to a whole new world, a place with no family, friends and a new language

"I still don't understand. Why would he do this to me? Why couldn't he just stay here."

As my tears rolled off my cheeks onto the pile of photos, I asked myself all these questions.

"Jess, trust me you won't understand now. You'll be thankful for it in the future."

Sick and tired of hearing the same thing from every family member. No one could answer my questions. All I had were the photos.



This photo, the man on the right is my grandfather's best friend, who became family. He and my grandfather's parents met on the boat here. It's a prime example of how strong the bonds on the boat became.

Life here didn't get off to an easy start for my Jidi. Often bullied, he found it hard to fit in because of his differences. Think about it like this. Meeting new people in general is scary... imagine being dragged to a new land, barely speaking the language. For a long time, his family was viewed as just another stereotypical 'Lebo' family. Little comments made here or there, whether it be about the food we eat, the clothes they wore, the way they looked or the deep tones in their voices, these 'little things' made my Jidi realise that the society he lived in here

was like a breeding ground for division and anger. Despite the racism he and his siblings faced they always knew they had each other. They defended each other at school and they would continue to learn the ways of Australia together.



My Jidi always had a business and family type of mindset. I guess it was the way he grew up. He was always taught that it's family first, then business. Being a hard worker was something he always prided himself on. He was put down a lot in school, not being 'school smart', however he was always 'street smart'. He left school in Year 9 and started working straight away to make an honest living. Working at such a young age provided him with the tools to have a strong work ethic. This is something he taught to all his kids as well.

"You know, Jess, he's only 23 in these photos"

Being surprised was an understatement, I was shocked

"After another trip to Lebanon when he was 18, he met your Tayta"

Yep, my Tayta, my grandmother, Shamis. They quickly got married at only 18, and she moved from Lebanon in the same year. My grandmother had never left the country before, i've spoken to Tayta about how she felt moving and she's always said

"I was scared, I didn't know what to expect. But it was a new start."

They had their first of six kids at the age of 19, and at only 23 my grandfather was able to open his first business. A restaurant called 'The Pineapple Spot' in the city.

This restaurant meant so much to him. His mum

worked there and so did my Tayta, his wife. This helped them support their own family, it's also how my grandmother learnt English. It was also just the start of his many businesses, the closing of this restaurant led to the opening of our current shop, the Dendy Deli. It led to them moving from Reservoir to Brighton.

It was a small shop then, but it sounds amazing. "There was a jukebox that played Elvis, Abba and songs like 'Jessie's girl' 24/7. Bright interior and comfortable booths. The food was always served in big portions." They made customers feel like they were at home.

Although they were still faced with discrimination, they learnt how to deal with it. They knew who they were and they knew what was most important... family. Family is very important in Lebanese culture, this has been taught to my parents and my cousins and me. As long as my Jidi was with his family, dancing, having a BBQ, he was a happy man.

"What's going on here?" I asked.

"This was just an average weekend. They had everyone over, they did Lebanese dances to traditional songs, the girls had been getting the food ready for days in advance."

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Over time, more relatives and Lebanese families started moving to Australia. They created their own community, their own village if you will. My Jidi accepted everyone. He knew what it was like to be an outcast; in response, he would spread love. He would offer help to the community and would take anyone under his wing to help them. The same way his neighbors in Carlton did to him.

“One day they just saw him at the front of the house alone and asked if he’d like to go with them”

This was the first time he’d felt a part of a community, they were the first people who acknowledged him.

After having six children, it became harder to have a stable home, keeping everyone under control and running a business. Although times got tough, real tough, they stuck by each other. Opening a new restaurant caused him to lose a house. My Jidi, his six kids and two grandchildren and my uncle’s wife had to move into a small house. Although people were not there for him at this time, he always put a smile on his face and still helped others. One time they were on top of the world, then it was like he hit rock bottom.

Finally after the restaurant in Church Street opened, he was able to build a house – a house with room for everyone. He knew he needed a place for not just his kids, but grandkids. A place they could always go to feel safe. This may have been the first time in Australia that he was able to take a step back and breathe.

Now, I look at the person I am today. My Grandfather, my culture, my family. These are all things that have shaped me. Now, I think back to that 8-year-old girl frantically crying and screaming. Because her grandfather was being ‘taken’ – taken back home. I understand now. My



Jidi sadly passed away in 2012, his last words were “Australia has been good to me. But i’ve never been able to rest here. I want to go back home. I know if I don’t, no one will go back”. We will always credit the amazing life we live today to the big move here, but it wasn’t an easy start. Although i didn’t understand why he wanted to be taken back home, he understood that we didn’t. I couldn’t be more thankful now. ■



This building was once my grandfather’s childhood home, this photo was taken after his brothers and he rebuilt it into three stories. They did this so that us, his children and grandchildren would always have a safe place back home. A place to always remind us where we came from.

THE WORD YOU CALL SELF-RESPECT

Gracie Chick · Year 7 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

Respect, this word has been around for hundreds of years, but does anyone know what it signifies; isn't there a deeper meaning? Even if you know how to respect others, no good can go out to the world if you don't know how to respect yourself first.

When you respect, you show self-respect and shall not neglect or let anyone set your future goals but strive for excellence, although you may be incorrect.

When you respect, you shall not wreck, or suspect a being's self, or property, for that will only cause deep regret.

You must confess your actions, for that will only result in a depressed state.

No one is perfect, so do not reject or disown yourself, but you should reflect, accept, and protect yourself and others.

Do not push yourself or others to be impressive, because in life there are many side effects from your past situations, child-neglect or overprotection is not the answer, you should not let your past reflect on others for that is your past and not another being's.

Do not disconnect, reject or not include another, for that is disrespect.

As you follow along with this poem I hope you project your inner respect, because at the end of the day, you may not be perfect but at the least you do know *how to have self-respect*. ■



McKenna O'Reilly
Year 8 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

Respect The Hidden Heros

Dear Health Professionals, I know you are in disguise saving the world.
I just want others to realise it. Thank you for your acts of bravery!

CAN'T TAKE ANY MORE DAMAGE

Madison Perez · Year 7 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

We watch as people hurt each other's feelings
We watch as small problems become bigger
We watch little words turn into hurtful rocks
They cut and leave shame behind.

When people no longer have the will to stand up
To yell 'stop and let me be'
We see a world where respect no longer lives
And feelings are no longer real.

We watch as people close their hearts
We watch them react to the comments they read
We watch them shut themselves down
They can't take any more damage.

When we look at others and see their pain
We can yell stop and let them be
We will see a world where respect lives
And feelings are allowed to shine. ■

RESPECT

Darcy Collins · Year 7 · Saint Francis Xavier College, Officer

R is for Responsibility. Respect can be shown by being responsible and obeying rules.

E is for Encouraging. Show respect to you classmates by cheering them on and encouraging them to do their best.

S is for self-respect. Loving yourself and accepting your flaws will keep you going every day.

E is for effort and always trying your best. You also need to respect and acknowledge others effort.

C is for Caring for others and making sure that they are okay.

T is for Treating others the way you want to be treated.
One of the most important rules of respect. ■



Cassandra Rawoteea
Year 8 · St. Peter's College



Natalie D'Souza
Year 9 · St. Peter's College



Claudia Berke
Year 11 · St. Peter's College



Brianna Coombs
Year 12 · St. Peter's College

RESPECT

Shea Murphy · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

Respect is a difficult concept to grasp. There are two main definitions for the word respect. One definition is regarding other people's feelings and one refers to a high opinion of someone. Both go hand in hand as we consider the feelings of those we admire and we admire those who consider our feelings and the feelings of others. Many people interpret respect differently. I believe that respect should be earned and make the people who deserve it safe and comfortable. People deserve a chance to earn respect after they make mistakes. Many role models and experiences have shaped my personal ideas of respect

Respect should go both ways. I don't believe in respecting your elders just because they're older than you, instead they should earn it. I don't respect my parents because they brought me into this world as anyone can have a baby, I respect them because they raised my siblings and I to be strong, capable people by demonstrating commitment and working hard. I respect Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez as she shares similar values and beliefs to me and isn't afraid to voice her opinions on issues such as sexism, racism, homophobia, transphobia. During the DNC she spoke of the need to "recognize and repair the wounds of racial injustice, colonization, misogyny and homophobia." This demonstrates AOC's constant acknowledgement of the serious, disgusting and wrong issues that still need to be resolved in society. This shows the concern and consideration coming from her for various groups, AOC's respect for us and our feelings earned our respect and high esteem for her, making her an outstanding role model and a perfect example of mutual respect on a large scale.

Respecting someone means making them feel safe and considered. This year has been a prominent year for protests against racism. The 'Black Lives Matter' movement has been spread all over social media. Celebrities play a huge role in the movement as they have huge platforms. Charli D'amelio is a wonderful role model for young people everywhere. Although all she was previously known for was 'Tik Tok' dances she is now well known for her support of 'BLM' and many other important

movements. Her ability to direct the attention away from drama towards better causes and the productive use of her platform demonstrates her care for the safety of others. This is a step forward as she is influencing her followers to respect the rights of everyone. We can help others by speaking out when we see any form of discrimination and defending their safety.

Many people were brought up by their parents who grew up in a different era. The views of some parents are discriminatory and disrespectful towards people who are different and they often pass their vile views onto their children which poisons their innocent minds. I do not at all respect prejudicial views in this day and age. Children are easily influenced especially by their parents. These children have every right to change their views after they have been educated. They have every right to be forgiven if they change their ways and start respecting everyone for who they are. People who have changed their beliefs deserve no hostility for their past beliefs as they were in a different environment and are respecting others now. I admire people who have the courage to change their views despite risking destroying family relationships as their parents are stuck in their outdated, cruel discriminatory ways. It is important we respect these people so they continue to respect us regardless of their disrespect in the past.

Respecting others is just as important if not more important than receiving respect. Our parents earning our respect from a young age teaches us to follow their example and earn the respect of others in our lives by doing right by them. Celebrities demonstrating respect shapes young minds into caring, considerate people which improves everyone's safety. The people that have changed their opinions should be rewarded as they have grown and are now doing their best at respecting everyone. I believe if everyone treats everyone equally, gives respect to people who make everyone feel safe and included no matter their differences and showed no respect for racists, homophobes and sexists everyone would be much happier. ■



Art Ministry Class Collaboration
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Stations of the Cross – Injustice

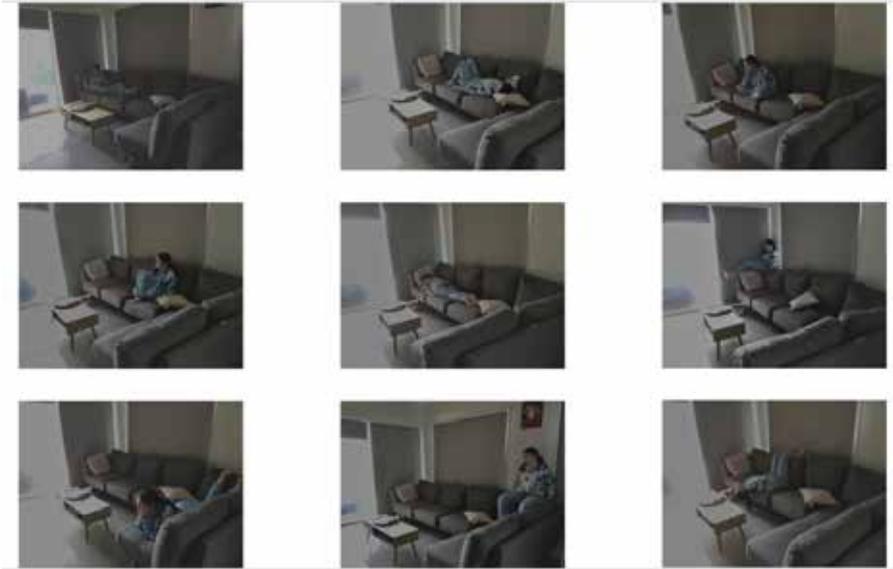


Jamaya Kennedy
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Jhanany Mokanasundaram

Year 11 · St. Peter's College



Michaela Moss

Year 11 · St. Peter's College

THE DREAM

Noah Liew · Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

In the late afternoon	But he doesn't know his own strength
A few miles south of Soledad	Thoughts circle through my head
The sycamores rustled in the gentle	Will we finally achieve our goal?
Afternoon breeze	The American dream,
The warm glow of the sun	Of owning our own farm.
Twinkling over the pool	Having money to spare
As we sit on the golden sand	Or will Lennie get us thrown out again?
I think about our future	His future is uncertain
Having just escaped from Weed	Neither bright nor frail
Because of Lennie	We can only hope and dream
Again, he is too strong	And continue to work hard. ■

GEORGE AND LENNIE

Angelo Attard · Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

George and Lennie run outta Weed
Found a place to work
With all the money they need
It was all coming together
The American dream
Until Lennie screwed it up
And tore up the team.
George and Lennie hiding in the brush
Stressed and silent
Exhausted from the rush
Got each other by their side
George pulled the trigger
Lennie died. ■

THE BIGGEST QUESTION EVER ASKED

Oscar Savage · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

The humming grew louder, they had arrived, Maria Osei didn't know what but she knew who had arrived. She was frantic, she snatched her four year old son Andre up and shoved him into the walking robe. Her two year old twins and partner were still out at the park. The humming was now like a death siren splitting eardrums. Maria's parents were another matter, they had moved back to Ghana after 30 years in Australia just a year back, they were going to be abducted as well. Maria's eyes widened, out of the corner of her eye out the front window she saw her partner with her twin sons sprinting toward the house. She opened the front door for them but without warning a sickly grey humanoid emerged from the bushes, it's eyes were as dead as a cemetery and beams of light shot out of them at her husband and twin sons, this seemingly transported them to the space craft. The thing then looked at Maria then at some scratches on her door and dissolved into thin air. Maria's eyes looked like they had seen death and she very well could have. She was so shocked that she just stood there, staring at the wall to death for over 5 hours. Going through her mind is a question, a drilling, utterly painful question, "what happened?"

5 years later...

Maria half wakes up, it is gloomy and drizzly outside the house. She goes back to sleep, she and Andre had done their hunting the day prior. Maria has many important things, the most important being knowledge of the situation they are in, she knows why they came, she knows who sent them but she most importantly knows that her family hasn't been killed.

At 7:50 Maria stumbles out of bed like a corpse. "Andre wake up, we need to start repairs on the car!", Maria yells as she walks down the hallway, Maria and Andre have managed to keep the house unblemished and well maintained. There are lots of resources to go around, if a wall went bad they would take a tin of paint from Bunnings, if they need to clean the sink they just swipe cleaning products from a supermarket. The food from the supermarket is now rancid though, so now they have to hunt for their food. But they still have entertainment! Their house runs on solar power and they have taken every DVD possible from Kmart, big W and JB HI FI. Maria and Andre easily make repairs to their car in under an hour.

It is still gloomy outside but they drive the car over the cracked up grassy road toward Essendon Airport.

"Why are we going to Essendon airport? It died before society did." Andre says.

"You'll see soon enough." Maria says mildly annoyed.

Maria parks the car in the middle of the Tullamarine freeway. They get out and trudge up to the waterlogged airfield. The zebras that escaped from Melbourne zoo 5 years ago had really taken a liking to this place. There was a big herd in the distance, Maria and Andre never ate zoo animals; they only ate livestock that wandered the streets. They stick to the edge of the airfield avoiding the herd and the swamp like conditions as they walk toward the tarmac and the helicopters. Maria has brought a book with her titled how to operate and repair a helicopter. She gives the helicopter a thorough inspection 3 times and finds that nothing is wrong with it, it just needs fuel. Fuel is easily accessible.

"Andre while I am flying this I will need you to instruct me on how to fly this helicopter." Maria says confidently.

Andre takes a step back, surely she has lost her mind, Andre thinks. Maria notices this and rolls her eyes.

"Andre, it will be absolutely fine, I went to uni and I know a thing or 2 about physics and aerodynamics." Maria says assuringly. Reluctantly Andre gets into the passenger seat of the helicopter. It takes many tries but eventually Maria gets the helicopter in the air.

They soar over Melbourne's northwest, it is very green and overgrown after years without maintenance. Maria hadn't revealed her intentions for the flight. Andre thinks it is for fun and is visibly enjoying it while at the same time fearing for his and his mother's life.

"Where are we going?" Andre asks.

"We are going to find other people." Maria breaths out.

"Couldn't we just have walked? Melbourne might be quite large but it isn't the size of Australia." Andre inquires.

"Lions." Maria says abruptly. "Lions, tigers, leopards you name them you will encounter them, I know where they are, they wander around inner Melbourne and they kill." Maria says.

As she says this Andre sees movement in his peripheral vision below, a full-grown male Sumatran tiger walking down Collins street.

“See, they are all around, I know this because we tried to visit the city years ago and we barely got out with our lives.” Maria remembers. Andre has trouble recollecting this memory he has had too many perilous experiences with animals in his life to differentiate this experience.

They land on St Kilda beach in yet another near-death experience that they can both add to their lists. Andre has never seen so much water and is perplexed by it. Maria smiles at this.

They walk through the streets of St Kilda, the buildings are still saturated with the water. This can't mask Andre's nostrils from the smell of something dead. Maria is clearly trying not to vomit as the smell reaches her as well.

“Mum over there!” Andre says and points in the direction of a pile of clothes.

“What is that? Let's take a look.” Maria says.

As they get closer they realise that it is not a pile of clothes but a person and they soon come to realise that that person was the smell.

Both Maria and Andre are shell shocked and disturbed by this discovery. Andre reaches out to touch the corpse but Maria smacks his hand away. Maria then proceeds to turn the corpse over realising that there is a knife in its back. This was murder the people have lost themselves. A faint BANG sweeps down the street. Without thinking Maria and Andre run back to the helicopter and fly it to where they heard the bang come from.

“How did they get guns?!” Andre asks out of breath.

“I have no idea” Maria says calmly. “I guess we will find out what they are up to” Maria says.

They see something that they didn't expect they see crime and a gang of gun wielding people shooting and committing a multitude of different crimes.

Maria flies the helicopter to the city and lands on top of the Rialto. They both get out of the helicopter and there is a long silence.

“Society has to reform, one way or another, somehow we need to stop this gang from terrorising people, we need to reform.” Maria says suddenly.

Unfortunately for Maria this statement is picked up by a surveillance camera and Andy, her brother in law, the reason for all this is informed.

“Follow them home, take her son tonight and leave a note saying that her son is gone because she is trying to reform society.” Andy says to his goons.

Maria and Andre get back in the helicopter and

have a rather uneventful flight home, they don't know the dangers that the night will hold.

Andre feels cold pressure on his temple, he is still waking up. “You make one sound and I will shoot”.

Andre is still very confused and in a daze.

Without warning one of these people duct tape Andre's mouth and pin him down taping his arms behind his back and taping his legs together. Andre is squirming, desperately trying to escape. One of the mystery men puts a note down on Andre's bed and without much effort carries him to their helicopter 100 meters down the street. Once they are in the air Andre has the duct tape violently ripped off his mouth. He has nothing to say, what can he say? Andre tried hard to think of something, but that just added to the massive headache of the situation he is in. Not until they were near the Australia 108 skyscraper did Andre finally say “where are we going and why have you taken me?”

“Your mother thought it would be a good idea to restart society and we are making her pay!” Booms one of the men.

“You are going to your aunt Thalia's residence in this building for the rest of your life.” Taunts another.

Andre is furious until he hears aunt Thalia.

“Aunt Thalia?” Andre asks, very confused.

“Yes your mother's sister Thalia is married to emperor Andy.” Says the first man.

Andre is still very confused by the situation.

The helicopter lands on the Australia 108 building at 1:34 am.

Andre walks inside, it is basically the world's biggest house. Many bedrooms, bathrooms, home theatres, swimming pools, restaurant like rooms and even 4 floors dedicated to sports.

Andre is escorted to the main congressional area. As he gets off the elevator he hears arguing in another room.

“You got your slaves to snatch my sister's son from her? Why the hell would you do that?” A woman yells.

“Don't you dare talk to me that way!” A man yells back, followed by the sound of a slap. Andre walks into a room that is 3 stories high and filled with water features, that is when Thalia sees him.

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Thalia is rubbing her cheek while she waves to Andre.

“Hi Andre, I am your aunt Thalia and this is your um,” Thalia hesitates. “Uncle Andy” she says with a scowl.

“Put him on floor 78 with the kids.” Andy orders as he walks out of the room.

“Yes master.” She says sarcastically causing him to grumble under breath.

Andre is escorted by Thalia to floor 78.

“Andre get some sleep, I will get you back to you mum, one way or another” Thalia says.

It takes a couple of hours but eventually Andre gets to sleep.

“Why would you do that!” Maria screams in fury.

Maria is distraught she has just read the note on Andre’s bed.

“Stay strong, don’t sulk, it won’t get him back.” Maria thinks to herself.

“Just go there and get him back.” Maria thinks.

Maria doesn’t need a plan. She just sets out toward the city on pure intelligence, she carries a knife and some cooked beef to eat as she walks down the Craigieburn line toward the city. She gets to the city loop without any hassle. She climbs out at Flinders street station and finds the perfect apartment building to set alight. She has matches and petrol and she easily starts the blaze to distract the guards. Within minutes there are about 30 people with co2 and water hoses running across the princess bridge. Maria takes her chance and runs across the bridge to the Australia 108 building. Maria has to be slick when she enters the building so she enters the building in stolen designer clothing and a full face of makeup, (something that Maria hadn’t worn in 15 years). The elevator guard just nods and she smiles as she walks into the elevator.

“How are they falling for this.” Maria thinks to herself confused. On the elevator she chooses to go up to the top floor and inspect it and then inspect each floor her way down.

“Floor 108” the robotic elevator voice says as the door opens.

“What the hell” Maria says.

The top floor is a fully functioning house. Maria wanders around and admires the view but tries not to get distracted. Suddenly Maria hears footsteps behind her and she freezes.

“Maria!” A familiar voice says.

“Thalia, is that you?” Maria questions without turning.

Before Maria gets a reply she feels Thalia wrap her arms around her from behind.

“I haven’t seen you in 6 years.” Thalia chirps.

They stand there conversing for over 20 minutes.

Then Maria asks Thalia, “where is Andre?”

“He is on floor 78 with my son and daughter, I’ll lead you there, we’ll have to be careful of my husband Andy he is a total dickhead, but probably passed out in a puddle of vomit.” Thalia says. As they made their way to the elevator they walk past a room with a metal door.

“What’s in there?” Maria asks.

“Everyone except for Andy is forbidden to enter that room, I did once but Andy punished me.” Thalia says.

“How does he punish you?” Maria asks in a concerned tone.

“He punishes my kids and I by pouring boiling water down our backs and then rubbing salt on the burns.” Thalia says with a sad look on her face.

“That sounds really terrible, what a dickhead.” Maria says empathetically.

“What is in the room though?” Maria asks.

“Alien contact, he is the reason everyone was taken, I sent you that code to scratch into your door 5 years ago that stopped them from attacking you.” Thalia says.

“Alien contact?” Maria pauses. “I’m going to contact them to come back.” Maria says.

Thalia wants to stop Maria, but she wants to let Maria contact the aliens more than she wants to stop her, so she lets her enter.

There is a big screen in a dark room with no windows and on that screen there is a button that says “alien messages”. Maria presses it and begins to type a message

Hello, it is Andy.

I have had a change of heart and I want all humans returned to earth in exchange for gold and titanium. Along with the humans can I please have all the appropriate resources and workforce for rebuilding society. Hope you all are well.

Andrew Jankowski.

Just after Maria presses send Andy bursts through the door with a knife.

“What the bloody hell do you think you’re doing!?” Andy screams.

Without a reply Andy lashes out at Maria with a knife, Thalia grabs a gun and shoots him in the side of the head with no hesitation, he drops to the floor... dead.

Thalia drops to her knees shaking, horrified and on the verge of tears. “What have I done?” Thalia whimpers.

“The right thing.” Maria says as she pulls Thalia into an embrace. They looked up to see the aliens had replied to the message.

Hello Andy.

We will arrive in 2 months with all the people and resources. Please be sure to have 2 tonnes of gold

and 3 tonnes of titanium ready for when we get here. We will supervise your reconstruction of society and leave when everyone is back on their feet.

David Wojciechowski, president of titan.

Maria smiles.

“Now I want to see Andre” she says.

Thalia escorts her to Andre.

4 months later...

Maria is now happily reunited with her family, her partner, Andre and her 7 year old twins.

“How was titan?” Maria asks.

“They treated us well, but everyone had a hole in them, they missed earth” her partner replies.

“You all are here now and we now have all the answers, answers to the biggest question ever asked”. ■

TINY CATERPILLAR

Ragan Ameya
Year 7 · Simonds Catholic Collage

Away from the world,
munching away on wet leaves,
so small and so brave. ■

NOTHING

Tomas Gebrehiwot
Year 7 · Simonds Catholic Collage

Quiet and silent
It’s nowhere but everywhere
its unlimited ■

THE BACKYARD SHED

Matthew Azzopardi
Year 7 · Simonds Catholic Collage

No overthinking
Concentration during metal penetration
Endless tinkering
Blood, sweat and tears, forget about the fears

Malleable melting metal
Helps the late night frost set in
In the midnight making mood
Blood, sweat and tears, forget about the fears

Envisioning accomplishment
Forever focusing
Celebrating Improvement
Blood, sweat and tears, forget about the fears ■

THE SAVIOUR

Steven Truong · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

The night the virus took hold was unforgettable. Almost everyone had already been infected but no one knew the true danger. Until it mutated.

John woke up in a cold sweat, taking in deep gulps of air. John runs a tired hand down his face, trying to rub the sleep out of his eyes. Glancing at the time; he sees the bright red numbers of his alarm clock, as if they were mocking him, 3:30 AM. Almost three hours before he needed to wake up. Yet another nightmare about that fateful day the virus hit. An engineered bio weapon designed to infect swathes of the population before a genetic 'kill-switch' activated, decimating the world's population and turning them into horrifying reanimated shells of their former selves. The last thing John sees every morning before waking up is the flooded hospital emergency room. Steadying himself and drawing a deep breath to ground himself to reality, dressing himself in ragged blue jeans, black boots and a worn zipped-up anorak. Lastly, for his own safety, he tucked a small knife and concealed it in his boot.

John decided to start his routine early instead of trying to fall asleep again. John had insomnia and hasn't slept peacefully in months. Ever since the outbreak started, due to being melancholic of the virus. The rings under his brown eyes were more prevalent than ever before, and both of his eyes were deepening in colour. With every passing day, he grew thinner and thinner. Oddly enough, despite being Asian, John tended to tower over most people, often giving him an intimidating figure. In reality, John was a thoughtful and caring character who always looked after other people.

One day while John was scavenging for food and medical supplies, he came across a girl who he saw was brutally attacked by a horde of zombies. Realising the girl was doomed, John ducked into a nearby alleyway to avoid drawing the zombies' attention. Heart hammering loudly in his chest, John listened closely as the grotesque sounds of the zombie horde grow quieter and quieter. He stayed in the alley for 5 more minutes after the sound faded, just to be sure, and silently mourned the loss of yet another life.

Continuing on his way, John, overcome by morbid curiosity, approached the dead girl. His eyes widened in shock, the girl was still breathing, she was alive! "Oh my god! Are you awake? H-how?"

The girl brushed her blonde hair from her eyes and mouth before replying "Yes, I'm awake. Don't worry, this sort of thing happens more often than you'd think."

John was flabbergasted at her undisturbed demeanour. Shaking his head to clear his thoughts, he needed to make sure she was okay before questioning her, "Have you been bitten or anything in the past few days?"

The girl tilted her head to the side, pondering the question, finally she replied, "No, but I've been bitten months ago and I found out that I'm apparently immune to the virus. The zombie bites don't affect me."

John asked "Is there anything else you want to tell me before I go?" as he turned to go.

Panic flashed in the girl's eyes as she cried out, "Wait! My name is Elizabeth and I need you to get me to the hospital in the city so that the doctors can use me to find a cure so that the world can be saved."

He looked pretty confused, thinking about the question carefully and replied "Sure? I'll go with you, as long as you follow my lead at all times."

Elizabeth responded "Of course, thank you for saying yes!"

As the two set out to the city, the familiar metallic tang of blood tainted the air around them as prevalent as oxygen. Along the way they encountered many zombies, alongside countless marauders. The horde of zombies and raiders was overwhelmingly massive, comparable to the likes of the MCG. The sharp crack of the gunshots filled the streets, as the marauders fired shots at both the zombies and each other. The deadly free-for-all created a nightmarish scene for any onlookers. They almost managed to sneak past the raiders and zombies without drawing attention, until one of the raiders suspected something strange was going on due to detecting John's coat. The raider approached a shattered car where John and Elizabeth were currently hiding, every step of his increasing the two's anxiety. Something had to be done, lest they both die. As the raider slowly walked towards their hiding space, a glistening object caught Elizabeth's eye, it had a metallic sheen to it. There was not much time to wait for the raider, it was either do or die.

Acting as quickly as possible, John smashed the car window, any second thoughts placed to the side as he fumbled for the knife. The sound drew the raider's attention almost as quick as a flash of lightning, running towards them to exterminate the source. As soon as he got there the knife was safely in John's grasp, ignoring the shards of glass piercing his skin as he withdrew the knife from the car. In one fell swoop, the raider became a corpse,

dropping to the ground like a brick. John and Elizabeth relaxed, having no source of concern except for the cuts and bruises they ended up with as a result of the scuffle, many of them surprisingly belonging to Elizabeth. While trying to figure out how to stem the blood loss, a plastic card caught the eye of the two. A closer look showed it was a keycard showing his leadership of the raider gang, as well as a healthcare card showing the closest hospital, a possible respite from the chaos that had recently occurred. The pair took the card and they made their way to possible salvation, having to endure one last horde before safety.

With that goal in mind, they set out to the location, gutting any zombie close with the skills of a hunter gutting their prey. Closer and closer the hospital got, striving them to continue walking regardless of the pain they endured. Upon opening the hospital doors, a sharp pain distracted John as he noticed rotten malformed teeth sinking into his flesh. Despite the extreme pain combined with the sudden fear of infection, the main goal of ensuring Elizabeth's safety drove him to keep going towards one of the hospital rooms, placing her life over his own. Slowly John escorted Elizabeth throughout the hospital and was holding the zombies at bay because he was afraid that Elizabeth might not get there due to the large number of zombies. As the door drew closer, the only thing John cared about was resolving this crisis. Even with the pain shooting all around John's body, the goal of saving Elizabeth drove him to continue walking. Zombies began closing in on them, grimly, he realised that only she would survive between the two of them. Using the last of his strength, he pushed her into the door, keeping it shut even as she shouted emotionally over and over "Don't leave me!" and "Let me take the fall!". But he had no choice. He had to protect her no matter the cost, that thought staying with him as

he responded with "Stay there, for me," as he battled the endless onslaught of zombies. Even with high amounts of adrenaline running through his body, he could only last so long, as the teeth sank into every muscle of his, as he smiled, knowing that if she was safe, he was happy.

The doctors in the room took care of Elizabeth, hoping to produce a cure as she wept, knowing John sacrificed himself for her and everyone, but the realisation of it occurring being worse than she could ever imagine.

A few months later, humanity was beginning to return to its former glory. The stench of flesh and blood has been replaced with a sense of normality, a vaccine for the crisis being synthesised from Elizabeth. Across the world people were rejoicing at the end of the insanity, except for her. She had been declared a hero for being immune to the virus yet she felt unworthy, like a false idol. The real hero was John in her eyes, sacrificing himself so she could save everyone else. They had spent so much time together, the prospect of leaving him seemed unfathomable. But it was the truth, he was really gone.

Making her way to his grave, she reflected on what they had both gone through, the raiders, the near-death encounters, and his final words of "Stay there, for me". It seemed wrong to let him go, millions were brought back while he was not. A tear fell down her eye as she reminisced, as clear as glass yet filled with a million sorrows. Roses are placed down on his grave, hoping soon she will be at peace as well, not just about John's death, but emotionally.

They both played their part, and if it were the other way round, he would be crying for her. Whispering the words "Thank you" to a deceased friend, she left. Better that she lived the life he allowed her, and many others, to have than mourning for what occurred. ■



Hugh Bradley
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda



Felix Pacheco
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda



Felix Pacheco
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda



Hugh Bradley
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

THE LARK'S PAIL

Stephen Zavitsanos · Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

The pail hurriedly fills to its brim
From a gushing river, pure and deep.
Unsullied by the chrysanthemums and lilies
Which encircle the babbling brook.

'Almost full!' proclaims the Lark
Perched atop an aged oak,
As the wet trickles down the bail,
'Soon, soon, soon' he sings his song.

Down flutters the Owl with a hoot,
'What say you, Lark?'
'With your songs so sweet and pail bursting,'
Feathered talons grasp the neighbouring birch.

The tinkling warble resumes,
'Not yet full!' the Lark weeps,
In a melodic trill.
'Still. More must be filled.'

Amidst the river stones and collapsed trunks,
The pail sits, engulfed in the serene.
O'er the vessel the Owl hovers,
As talons clutch the sopping bail.

Suddenly, the jaws separate, delivering a soft hoot;
'To be bursting is no more complete than to be
hollow',
Warns the venerable Owl with its warm,
Serrated feathers surrounding its pale face.

'Well, when shall I quit?' asks the Lark in a daze,
Raising its beak to the Heavens.

'You shan't quit. For we all strive to be full.'
Asserts the Owl, bathed in divine light,
'The water shall forever drip in this stream, as it
shall drip in you.'
As he ascends in a flurry, the pail too flies,
Splashing upon the adjacent foliage,

Now it rests
Neither full nor empty. ■



Joshua Leroi
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

Under the Walkway

RESPECT THE RULES

Evan McVey · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Remember that you are fine
Even though it doesn't seem that way
Staying apart is keeping us together
People, we'll get through this
Everyone is in the same boat
Coronavirus will not end us
Time will tell who'll win the battle

Twenty seconds of hand washing
Helps us conquer the disease
Excelling your health

Respect all humans
Utterly ruthless we must be
Letting go too early
Encourages the virus
Social distancing is a must ■

RESPECT OTHERS

Archie Philpot · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Respect others
Earn respect
Speak with respect
People have feelings
Expand friendships
Care for others
Think before you speak

Other people matter
Thank people for what they have done
Have you done the right thing?
Enjoy life
Respect yourself
Stay connected with friends ■

MR. HOARD

Christo Ziourkos · Year 7 · De La Salle College

A Story in 100 words.

Eighty year old Mr. Hoard lived in a little house. He became the most complicated man in the world when his wife died. Instead of downsizing, he began to 'hoard' things that reminded him of her. He stored her treasures in a shoebox. When things didn't fit, he got more boxes.

He added more levels to his crowded house to

fit more stuff. It grew incredibly high and started wobbling.

His wife said to him in a dream: "Stop hoarding, live your own life."

He trashed everything but the precious shoebox.

He finally realised: "One man's trash is another man's treasure". ■

THE BEAM

Angus Emons · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Inspired by a photograph.

“Ay Sammo, chuck us a smoke!”

“Aight, one sec,” I replied. That was Jimbo, always asking for our smokes. I passed him the cigarette and lighter.

“You better not drop my lighter! I’ll never get it back from this high.”

We were sitting atop the suspended beam in our construction site, relaxing after work. Well, most of us relaxing, not Greeno, the newbie. I ‘spose I probably was scared the first time I went on the beam too, as it is about 200 feet up. It was a tradition that myself, Jimbo, Jamo, Waneo, and Bob, all went up to the beam after work, occasionally joined by Mary and Liz. We had finally convinced Greeno, the new guy, to join us up there. It was always great fun, laughing at the newbie on their first time, but this was different. Greeno had taken way less time to convince than the rest of us had, me included. I felt respect for him, as he nervously sat there.

“Alright, time head to down for me,” I sighed.

“No, stay!” the others all whined.

“No, no, I can’t, me Mrs. is making a roast for tea, gotta get home,” I explained, as I got up, standing on the beam and started to make my way across to the scaffolding. That’s when things started to go wrong. I reached to my pocket and -

“Ah dammit, my lighter!” I had dropped it. It was long gone. “It was a good one too”.

I bent down to shake hands with the lot and leave

when, I slipped, and fell wordlessly off the edge of the beam. Wind rustled noisily in my ears as I fell. I knew that there was a rope about 50 feet off the ground, so I searched desperately for it, somehow my mind in “I’m in a spy movie” mode. I saw the rope, and better yet, it was within arm’s reach. I timed my grab, and somehow held it, but it only broke my hand and elbow and slowed my fall. I looked around as -

“Broken right hand, wrist, elbow, left hip, and shattered left knee. He was lucky to escape alive”.

That was ... I don’t know who that was, and they sounded like they were underwater.

“Where!” I awoke and shouted so suddenly that there were multiple screams of people being scared. I tried to sit up, and felt numb all over.

“Don’t try to sit!” said a nurse urgently. “You fell from extremely high and are very hurt.”

It was all coming back to me. My wife swept wordlessly through the room and embraced me.

18 Months Later.

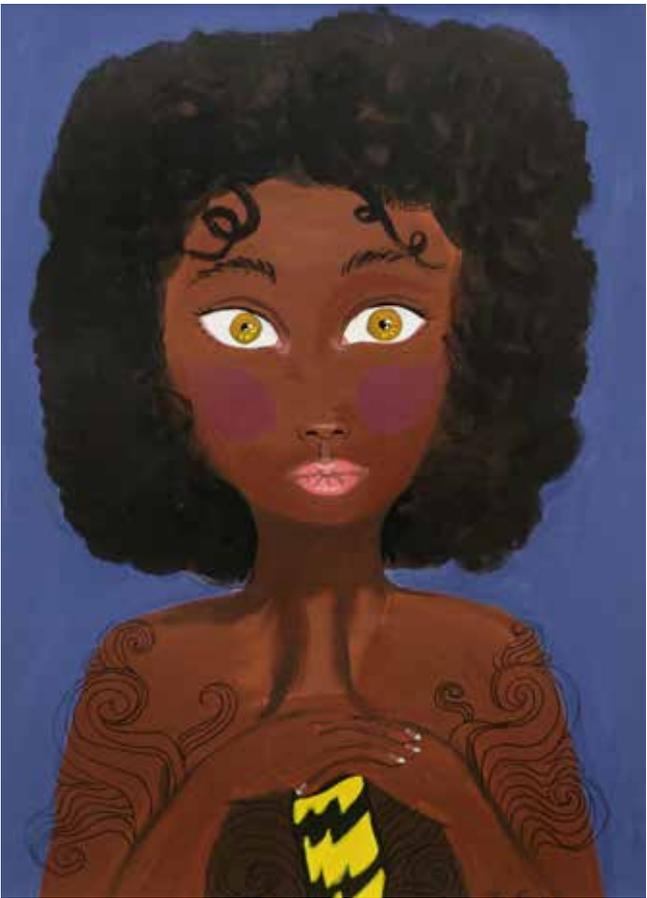
“Hey Sammo, you coming up to the beam?”

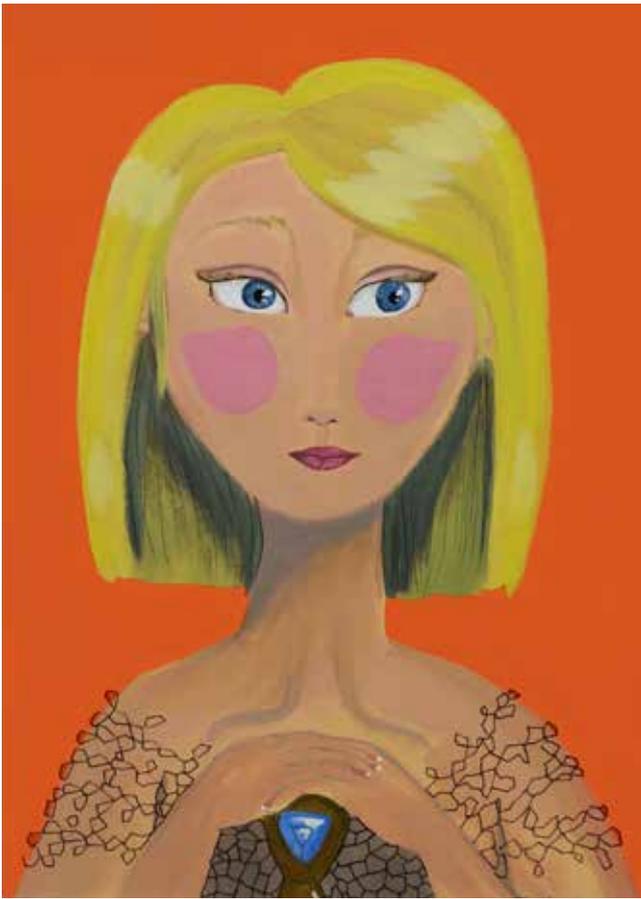
I hesitated, thinking of the last time I was there.

“You don’t have to!” said Jamo quickly, seeing me hesitate.

“No. I’m coming up,” I replied.

On the beam I realised how much newfound respect and admiration I had for myself. Sitting way up there. ■

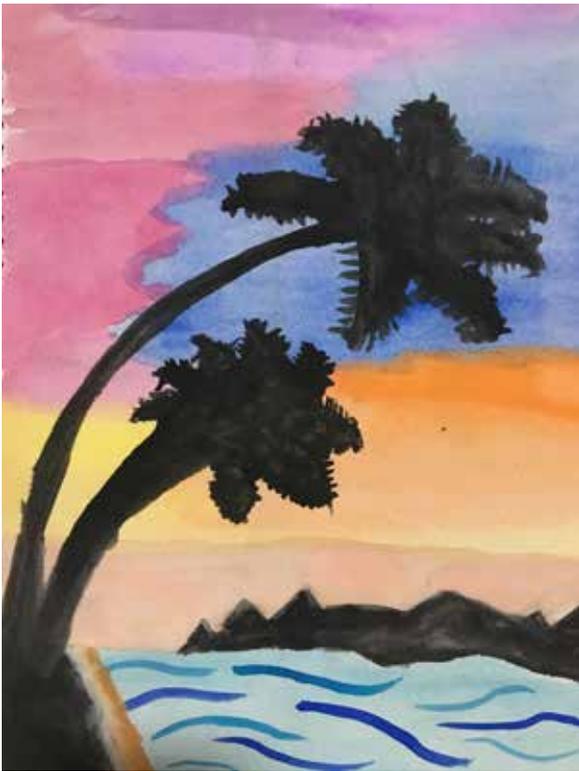




Téa Mancini
*Year 12 · Catholic Regional College
Sydenham/North Keilor*

She is You

My work represents women from everywhere, especially young women. They may not seem physically strong or capable of winning a brawl, but they are fierce. I have been underestimated because of my delicate and feminine facade, so have many others like me, therefore, I use the symbol of the sword to represent strength, resilience, determination and will power. We may be small, but never dare to underestimate a woman. Show some respect.



Joya Abdelmalak

Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Sunset of Colours

The painting captures the moment, as the sun is dipped below the horizon, the fleeting colours of dusk begin to fade away. Hovering over a glamorous calm beach with soft sand, tall palm trees and charcoal-black rocks circled around the calm waves.



Liljana Fedcesen

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Deserted Freedom

Respect should be given to everyone you meet, as you never know what happens to someone behind closed doors, or what they are going through. This piece represents the struggles people may face. However, through perseverance and determination, there will always be light at the end of a tunnel, and more often than not, it can be quite beautiful. Respecting each person you meet can always have an impact on them; especially if an individual is going through a rough patch in life, it makes all the difference.



Monique Camilleri
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College
North Keilor*

Interrelationships

All of nature lives in harmony with each part, reliant on the other to survive. This relationship shows a real respect for what is in our world. We humans should learn to respect this interrelationship as we too have a part to play in maintaining this balance.



Monique Camilleri
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College
North Keilor*

Good Will Prevail

Amongst all of the turmoil that prevails in our world, we can find beauty. In these moments we are reminded of the hope we must have that good will be victorious.



Alessia Bacchin
Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Reaching Out

It is important the if we want to live in harmony with others we need to reach out to all people and respect who they are.



Tayla Gorman
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Together We're All Powerful

It is important that everyone connects with one another and in doing so treat each other with respect and kindness. If we do this, we become one and therefore powerful force.



Isabella Iaccino
Year 12 · Catholic Regional College Sydenham/North Keilor

Rebirth

The world of art gives us opportunities to view our world differently. Through the creative works of artists like Dali and Khalo our imagination is heightened and at the same time we are asked to think about how we perceive others.

TEEN VOGUE MOCK UP

Kayla Carmen · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Find out what Kayla has been doing during her isolation lockdown

In an interview with ‘Teen Vogue Magazine’ about what she is grateful for Kayla said this...

“This was a time for bonding for me. At the start of isolation we got a golden retriever puppy named George. So, I really think during this time I got to connect with him and make him like me but also trust me.”

“As we were all locked up in our houses the little things made me so grateful like having toilet paper and hand sanitizer.”

“This whole lock down and self-isolation has really changed me as a person with lots of time to myself I get to see a different side to me; this can be through trying something new!”

-Kayla Carman

What Kayla has to pass the time?

With all this time on Kayla’s hands these are some things she recommends doing that she did over isolation! Putting together a puzzle, cooking or baking a homemade meal, going for a run/working out, walking the dogs, practising netball and talking to friends through social media to stay connected with one another, as it’s important to check up on your friends every now and again.

What did Kayla miss out on?

- Her Birthday (18th April)
- Going to Bali (July)
- Celebrating her Mum’s Birthday (22nd April)
- Going shopping in Chadstone (24th April)
- Whole netball season (Autumn-Winter)

Who did Kayla miss through isolation?

“I really missed the company of my friends and extended family” -Vouge interview

“Although we are stuck inside now it will not be forever so keep your chin up” -Kayla. C ■

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

Jade Storey · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Over the time of lockdown, I discovered that socialization was extremely important and that I really needed it. I struggled not being able to communicate with people in person. Talking over text started getting to me. The work was starting to become too much and it all became very overwhelming.

I was extremely grateful I had my brother Dylan there, although he annoyed me to bits. I found whenever I was stressed, I would listen to music, which I cannot normally do at school. I would also go out to the horse paddocks and just spend

time with them. I do not know how I would have survived if we still lived in town. Mum and Dad were never really around as they were always at work but they would message us each time they went on their lunch break to see if Dylan and I had any questions or if we just needed to talk. The teachers were pretty good at replying, answering questions and just being there to help at most times. Sometimes it was a little slow especially when I really needed an answer for my work. It was quite frustrating at times but it turned out all right. Before lockdown I took some things for granted but I feel like most of that has changed now. ■



Brittney Paulet
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Photography

Respect for the beauty that nature brings

LIFE IN LOCKDOWN

Liam Zomer · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Something that I missed in lockdown is doing work
on schedule and not having to make my own.
Lockdown was fun
But I wished it was done
Most liked it
But it was a pain in the bum
COVID-19
Made work hard for me
Scheduling was tough
And the screen was rough
But I got through
And I have learnt something too
School isn't that bad
At least for me
So next time you're bored
Think of COVID-19 ■

MICHELANGELO AND LEONARDO DA VINCI

Elly Fleming · Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College

A comparative paragraph on Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci to see which significant individual had a greater impact on society:

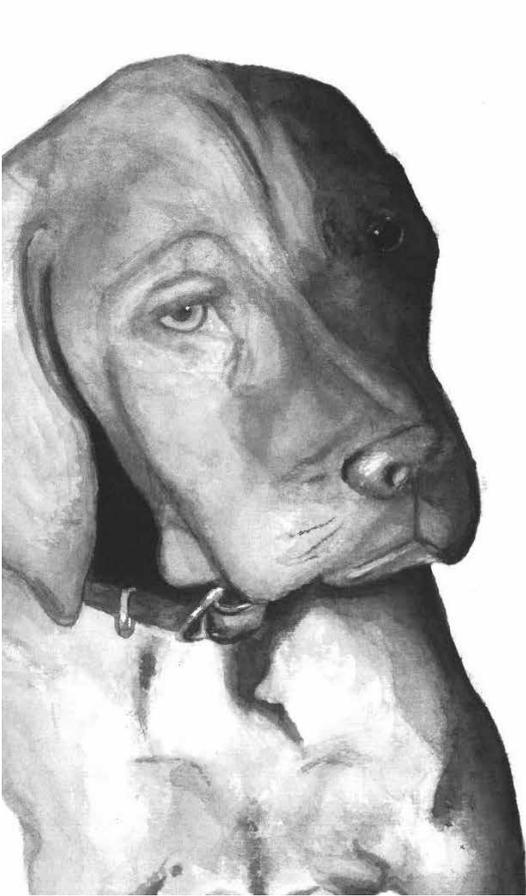
Michelangelo and Leonardo da Vinci both had a great impact on society during the Renaissance period in Italy. Furthermore, both are still very influential figures in today's modern society. In particular, da Vinci inspired others through his work and encouraged children to ask questions. Similarly, Michelangelo also influenced

people in his art through the Christian faith. Da Vinci led the way for the modernized technology we have today. Whereas, Michelangelo helped people to view art and artists differently, although he didn't make inventions or discoveries that contributed to society today. Da Vinci's inventions led to modern day crafts like, the helicopter, parachute and diving suit. As a result, through the life he lived and contributions he made to society, Leonardo had the greatest impact on the world today. ■

LOCKDOWN BLUES

Isabelle Ambrose · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

Quarantine was a bit like hell
And brought on quite a bad smell
No friends caused some pain
And school started to hurt my brain
Toilet paper was all the rage
And hand sanitizer was always engaged
Coronavirus never got off the news
And it honestly made me want to snooze
The air was cleaner than ever
I thought the quarantine would last forever
Technology became my worst nightmare
Whenever I got angry, I gave it a cold hard,
death stare
Parents became grumpy and irritable
The pantry and fridge soon became irresistible
1.5 metre social distancing made me frown
Even when my dad was being a clown
Days began to blend together
Along with the terrible weather
Of course, it all came to an end
But the government is afraid there's more around
the next bend
Winter is here, along with the end of term
And I can't wait to have a new turn
At being a year 7 in a normal life
And never getting in heaps of strife
For not responding to a dull email
Because my brain was as slow as a snail ■



Hailee Henry
Year 10 · Lavalla Catholic College



Jocelyn Heenan
Year 8 · Lavalla Catholic College



Rex Chard
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

Nature



Samuel O'Brien
Year 10 · CBC St Kilda

Spring

AN EMBER IN THE HAYSTACKS

Mikaela Giblin · Year 12 · *Star of the Sea College*

‘See ya Marcie!’

Marcia waved Tracy goodbye. Standing on the cracked dirt, she waited there until the discordant hum of the tires and crumbled limestone faded. She hoped that the car would stay in sight forever; an eternity on the horizon.

She attempted to hang on to the detail of the ricocheting small stones forever. They gradually became a vivid blur in the distance; a mere speck in the heat blanket that disorientated the horizon. Marcia realised the obsolescence of that kind of serenity, causing her to frown. Yet with an ounce of hope she considered it for a few moments longer, rejecting the thought as the car eventually melted away.

She had taken note of the foreboding hue of grey in the sky that morning. This kind of caution was not unusual. Marcia consciously knew that she shared a peculiar connection with the country, but that was a secret that she had kept to herself. It had seemed to always warn her about forthcoming conflict, not that her life really held enough significance to be reflected in the sky.

The porch creaked. Marcia winced and felt her shoulders envelop her chest, shortening her breath. Even though she wasn’t facing the house, she could recognise those footsteps anywhere. It was a funny thing, she thought. There was something indifferent about a footstep, almost like a language of its own. Somehow she managed to figure out whoever it was passing her by. Her brother, Paul, had footsteps very much reflecting his cavalier attitude, lacking any hint of elegance or rhythm. He embodied a different cadence each day, as though he never really knew where he was going. Her mother’s footsteps were rather soft. They came and went without disturbance, much like her affability.

Then there were her father’s, the footsteps that were steadily approaching her in that moment. The easiest ones to pair a familiar face to. Usually they were both gentle and heavy all at once, understandable for bearing the weight of a middle-aged man. It had always reminded her of the unusual physicality of his kindness. But this was not any typical time. She sensed the anger in this sound and visualised hot steam bursting from his ears. Marcia’s imagination frightened her. Seconds passed slowly and she regretted being situated so far from the house. It amplified the tension in a very unfavourable way.

‘I told you!’. He was about five metres away now. She turned to face him and an outstretched finger pointed at her chest.

‘Dad..’, it was an exasperated response, as though she’d already admitted defeat.

‘I promise it wasn’t me!’.

Last time her father found cigarettes in the haystacks Marcia was warned that Tracy wouldn’t be allowed to come over again. Her friend had snuck them in via her pillow case, revealing the white box to Marcia with nonchalance. It was almost patronising, the way Tracy raised her eyebrows and cocked her head towards the barn. Marcia had never been sure if she was trying to impress or intimidate her with this habit of ‘breaking the rules’. Even though she had previously desired smoking a cigarette, the fact that Tracy had suggested it almost immediately spoiled its appeal.

‘Uh, yeah, ok’, Marcia had said.

An hour later they were in the barn to the right of the house. Marcia was hunched on a small wad of hay in the back corner and Tracy was leaning upright against the wooden door. The afternoon light had broken through the holes in the barn, illuminating the cigarette in Tracy’s hand. Marcia noticed how she held it; balanced between her index and middle finger. She watched her shut her eyes and inhale, entranced by the way the smoke had almost danced out of her lips and melted into the air. Marcia knew Tracy too well to see this attempt at coolness as nothing more than an attempt. She didn’t like it when Tracy acted that way, like maturity and knowledge granted her a form of superiority. She sometimes found this behaviour difficult to stomach and was momentarily disappointed for being friends with her. During this thought, Marcia lifted her cigarette to her lips and inhaled. She glanced at Tracy with bitter admiration. A faint outline of her nose revealed itself as her eyes crossed; watching the smoke melt into the air, bearing the remnants of her concern. She had silently thanked the nicotine for it’s relief.

This is cool, she had thought.

‘What were you thinking Marcia!’

She realized that her father had discovered the cigarette butts in the barn. Well, actually Tracy’s. Marcia discarded hers in the rotten water tank around the side of the house, she had told Tracy to do the same. This discovery came apparent from the customary emphasis in the “sss” of her name that her father spat, like some sort of rotten food. It sounded foreign and very unlike the ‘Marcie’ he usually called her. However she chose not to

express her distaste. It wasn't an appropriate time, she thought. Instead she remained silent because her father's argument was somewhat reasonable. Marcia had actually shared the same concern as she watched the cigarette embers glisten in the barn the night before. Perhaps it was the sheer possibility of chaos and disarray that led her to the approval of Tracy's idea. Marcia's life had seemed to follow a conventional pattern that remained constant against all odds, just as the sun rises and sets each day. This realisation made Marcia grit her teeth. She was usually well-behaved, but she hated the prospect of good behaviour being conducted solely to please her parents. She often thought about this and figured that she had never really broken the rules because

1. She was isolated in the middle of Western Australia and
2. She had one friend, Tracy, whom she saw irregularly.

Her father continued to waver his long, wrinkly finger at her small body. It was almost like he was trying to dig a hole through it, just as the ember from the cigarette had created a hole through the hay.

'You're not a child anymore Marcia! You should know better than trying to light them haystack's up!'

Marcia refrained from rolling her eyes, it was difficult. He was right after all. She justified her irresponsibility as a symptom of adolescence. The realisation of this made her suppress a giggle. She liked the thought of being a teenager and the alluring construct of rebellion.

Marcia momentarily reflected on her youth; the ragged and raw landscape surrounding her that was her playground. For about eight years both Marcia and Paul smelt of manure and mould, transferring it onto all of their clothes. Marcia noticed it still lurking in the house sometimes, she often reminisced. If it hadn't been for the odour and Tracy's disapproval she would have continued this 'childish' behaviour. It was fun, she remembered.

She felt threatened by her father's wide eyes and

stiffened stance. It was times like these where she wanted to shrink about 15 centimetres and have her mother help assist in putting on a pink 'Target Country' day dress again. Rebellion should remain a thought for now, she mused.

'Dad, I-'

'What's going on?'

Marcia was almost appreciative for her mother's interruption, she hadn't yet come up with a plausible excuse and was about to attempt a hopeless improvisation. Perhaps she was going to say it was Tracy's fault, but she knew her friend would never be allowed to come over again. Marcia would become even lonelier than before. She broke the intense eye contact with her father and searched for her mother. She was standing on the porch with a thick piece of masking tape on her forehead.

'It's for the wrinkles, sweetie', her mother had said a few weeks ago.

She had always returned home with a new gimmick. Days later Marcia would find it in the old water tank that acted concurrently as a rubbish bin; the same site she threw away the cigarette butt. Her mother had caught her retrieving a 'child-friendly knife' out of the rusty corrugation. She had let her 4-year-old brother cut a tomato for the bolognese with that knife the night before. He had cut his hand and her mother had become distressed. Marcia still couldn't figure out if the crimson colour in her pasta was from Paul's blood or the tomato paste. She had eaten it anyway.

Right now, as her mother stood on the porch in the distance, she internally questioned the role of the masking tape. She didn't understand how some glue would prevent the protruding lines that battered her mother's milk skin.

Marcia realised that the confrontation at current and the lecture she had received when she found the 'child friendly knife' was humorously similar. This thought remained unspoken and she stood there like the child she was and suspected she'd always be. ■

DALLY

Eva Breen · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

A creative response to a scene from S.E.Hinton's classic novel The Outsiders, from another character's perspective.

“Johnny, Johnny, wake up! You can't go now! Wake up Johnny! Get up!”

I was runnin', runnin' as fast as I could; I had to let out some steam. I was sprinting down the streets tryna' release some anger. I was hopin' it'd cool me down. It didn't.

I swerved into the local 7 Eleven. The cashier tried to greet me, but I was living too quick. I pulled out my heater and he froze; it wasn't loaded but I gotta' keep my bluff. I kept a close eye on him as I walked back to find somethin' to steal, something to smash – I didn' really know, just needed to cool off. I was all up in my thoughts as I rushed down the empty aisles. The thought of losing Johnny was buzzin' around my head like a fly in the heat. He wasn't gone. I was sure he was just sittin' in Pony's front yard – they'd be talkin' bout' something, they're always chattin'.

The store was silent, all I could hear was the cashier nervously tappin' his foot. “Shut it!” I yelled at him as I lifted the gun. He stopped in an instant. I knew that I'd have to grab somethin' real quick; that kid woulda' called the fuzz by now. I found the aisle with the cheap plates and silverware – it was the same plates Pony had at his house. I grabbed a stack of plates and stuffed 'em in my jacket. I was brain dead, didn't have a clue what I was lookin' for. I was still walkin' around the store, not thinkin'. I could hear sirens in the distance; the kid had called the fuzz on me.

I pulled out my heater and ran to the front of the store. I looked at the cashier with his hands up, gun starin' right at him. “You little...” The sirens were gettin' louder. I pulled out one of the plates and

threw it at him as I ran out' the store and down the street, shovin' people outta' the way.

“Jeez, Dally, what are ya' doin'?” I thought to myself. The sirens were gettin' louder. I saw a phone booth up the street. I sprinted up to it an' swerved inside. I turned my head and took off my jacket so when the fuzz drove past they wouldn't see who I was. Finally, the cop car drove right past me. I picked up the phone and dialed in Pony's home number. “Pick up kid, pick up”

“This is Ponyboy...”

“Hey kid, it's Dally. Look I just robbed the grocery store, the fuzz are after me, I need you to get the gang and meet me at the lot. NOW!”

“Well shoot, what do you want me to do 'bout it?”

“I'm not playin' games here Pony, get to the lot now.”

“Righto' be there soon, you good...”

I hung up before he could finish. I couldn't sit there 'n listen to him play games with me. I grabbed my jacket, stormed out the booth and headed to the lot. I was sprinting down the block and up side streets. My thoughts were ringing in my ear, all of them at once. I can't think straight when all my thoughts are buzzin' at the same time. It's like tryna' listen to Soda talk when Two-Bit won't shut up. When I finally reached the lot, the gang were all rushin' in, just in time. The fuzz had found me and were pullin' in too.

Finally all my thoughts had caught up to me. I'm starin' at the cops, I can't hear what they're sayin'. All I can hear is Johnny's voice. I'm reaching for my heater, gotta keep my bluff.

The ground is cold. I know I'm spose' to be hurt, but I can't feel anything. The gang are yellin' – I can hear that. See ya' soon, Johnny. ■

JOHNNY

Scarlett Charewicz · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

A creative response to a scene from S.E.Hinton's classic novel The Outsiders, from another character's perspective.

I listened to the car that I recognize in my nightmares pull up beside me. I remembered all the things they did to me that day that I had tried to hide from Ponyboy. The smell of booze and regret filled the air. It was Bob and his gang. I noticed the rings on Bob's fingers and whipped out my switchblade. They circled us and it was too late to run now – I was scared to death. I could feel my skin crawling and my face turn ghostly.

They started to talk, 'Hey, what do you know? Here's the little greasers that picked up our girls. Hey greasers!'

To be honest, I wasn't really listening. I just stared at Bob and his metal rings. I remembered them ripping open my skin like it was butter. Then I looked up and felt a boost of confidence and blurted out, 'You're out of your territory, you'd better watch it.'

I was scared because Bob was eyeing me up and down. And then he insulted us and I could feel my blood start to boil and didn't know what was happening. It just started.

Then Bob turned to Pony. 'You know you could use a bath greaser.' He summoned his fellow Soc, David, to give Pony a 'bath'.

Pony boy ducked and tried to avoid him but eventually got caught. With his hands behind his back, Pony was being drowned in the fountain. I didn't know what to do. **THEY WERE GOING TO KILL HIM.**

All of a sudden, I blacked out. I mean I don't really remember what happened; I just lunged at Bob and punched him as hard as I could before he could get me with those rings. He tried to fight back, but I wouldn't let him. I just went at him and before I knew it I had gotten my switchblade out and planted it right in his stomach. I regretted it as soon as I did it. The other Socs ran away, leaving Bob in a pool of blood.

When Pony was released from Bob's grip he fell onto the concrete. I just watched the breath going in and out of this little boy's body. It was because of me he was alive, but also my fault Bob wasn't. I

could feel the guilt in me like it was a big rock on my chest. I just had to let it out but to who? Now, I moved my attention to Bob – big Bob – although he didn't seem that big anymore; he just seemed like a lump of muscles in a growing pool of what would have been scarlet blood. To our eyes, in the dark, it was just black.

It was a strange feeling being a murderer. It felt like I had conquered the one thing that kept me awake at night, but also felt like someone had just taken out a huge bit of my soul and stomped on it. I felt sick. I looked at Pony and saw he was starting to come to. Although I wanted him to be alright, part of me wanted him to stay passed out. I didn't want to tell anyone about what I had done, even though I wanted to get it off my chest. I watched him coughing and spluttering water from his lungs. I could tell he was cold; his teeth were chattering and his clothes were completely soaked as the cold wind blew. He sat up, water dripping down his face. I wasn't looking at him; I was staring straight ahead, looking off into the distance.

After about a minute of silence, I looked at him and said, 'I killed him, I killed him, I killed that boy.'

Pony took this information in, looked at me and blurted out, 'JOHNNY, I THINK I'M GOING TO BE SICK.'

I told him to go ahead, that I wouldn't look, and as I said these words, without hesitation, he did. I wasn't looking, but I could hear him. I could tell he was trying to be quiet but I could still hear him unloading his insides.

Then he looked at me for confirmation and said, 'You really did it, huh?'

I looked at him. 'Yeah, I had to. They were drowning you, Pony. You were going to die. I just couldn't let that happen. They had a blade. They were going to beat me up,' I said with a shaky voice.

Ponyboy looked away and asked, 'Like they did before?'

I confirmed, 'Like they did before.' Then I started to explain what had happened when he was under water and I watched him go even paler than before.

Then it was silent. ■

DAVID

Sophie Etheridge · Year 8 · *Star of the Sea College*

A creative response to a scene from S.E.Hinton's classic novel The Outsiders, from another character's perspective.

Being a Soc isn't all that good. I mean, sure, we have Corvairs and Mustangs and pick up broads like they are smashed pop bottles on the ground, but a load of us have family troubles, like my buddy Bob. All he wants is his folks to say no to him; he needs boundaries, ya know? Randy's parents don't have time for him; they sit in their offices doing work all day without even worrying about him. At least the gang are like family for the ones who don't have great ones. They have a blast, jumping greasers, getting pickled and having trouble with the fuzz.

I, on the other hand, would rather sit and watch Mary Poppins with my kid sister. I guess I'm not like the rest of the gang, but I don't really have any other buddies and I sure wouldn't want to be sitting alone at school. So I go along with the gang, act tuff and call myself a Soc because if I didn't, I would probably be dead by now.

My parents were always there for me. We used to go skiing in the winter with my sister, Kerry, to the beach on warm summer days. That all changed the day my mom came home and told my dad she was seeing another man. I was in the hallway while they were arguing about it in the kitchen at midnight. The next day, she had packed her bags and was long gone. I've never seen her since. My dad has never been the same: he drowns his sorrows in alcohol every night and when he's drunk, he gets violent.

My sister and I now live with my Nanna because my pop is just too dangerous. Every now and again, I go out with the Socs, just to keep up my friend status with them. One night, I decided I would let loose for the first time and have a couple of drinks. I'd never done it before because I know what happens to my dad when he gets drunk. We had gone to the drive-in and then to the bar for a while and I had had a beer and a couple of whiskeys. I guess that was enough to not process what was

going on around me. We then drove around the east side of town. The others were looking for greasers, especially the ones that had been chatting up Cherry and Marcia at the drive-in. Cherry is Bob's girl.

I wasn't saying anything because I was most certain that no greasers would be out at three in the morning. I was wrong. Two young greasers were standing by a fountain in a park. Before I could work up the courage to say anything, the gang were charging towards them in a drunken stupor with little old me trailing behind them. I can't remember much from that night, all I know is that Bob got killed and it was the smaller greaser who did it. Bob and I were best buddies. He was the only one in the gang that knew I didn't really wanna be there, but he still treated me like a brother. He was the only Soc who really cared about me.

I was thinking about my mom while the gang was talking to the greasers. I don't know what they were saying, but it must have been bad enough to get violent.

"You could use a bath, greaser." I heard Bob saying this; I'd seen that side of him. "And a good working over. And we've got all night to do it. Give the kid a bath, David."

When Bob said that, a wave of revenge came over me. I wanted to hurt someone like my dad hurt my sister and me. I grabbed the youngest greaser's hair and held his face in the water of the fountain. He struggled for a moment but then gave up. The black-haired greaser went at Bob and slugged him right in the face. The whole gang was rearing up to beat this kid into tomorrow. That was until he went to his pocket and pulled a blade.

'What are you gonna do, kill us?' Bob teased the kid. He didn't think a greaser would have the nerve to kill someone. But the kid went at Bob and sliced his throat. I could tell the kid didn't mean to do it, but he did it.

The gang and I split before the fuzz showed up. ■



Trent Bunker-Smith
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

Class Project – Canopy Tree Landscape

THE BUSTLING STREETS OF SAIGON

Julie Hoang · Year 8 · Nazareth College

This piece is incredibly personal to me and discusses the respect that I have for my heritage and my language. Julie Hoang

Beads of sweat run down my sticky forehead as the humid air continues to rise in temperature. I am finally here. My dry eyes dart up and down, scanning the chaotic crowd for a familiar tan face. Similar, tan faces holding white signs with the visitor's name, can be seen awaiting visitors in the large crowd, but nowhere can my uncle be spotted in the horde behind the barrier. Suddenly, I feel a sharp pinch on my shoulder. Ông Cậu Lai immediately smothers us with a warm, welcoming embrace and helps wheel out our large, grey, Antler suitcases.

Outside, the bright, red, yellow fluorescent signs of fast food places flood my eyes. My mouth waters as the smoky smell of grilled, juicy beef travels to my nose. However, the python-like lines for orders are just too long as many hungry passengers are also likely attracted to the smoky smell. "Taxiiii, Taxi," the friendly voices of men in sapphire blue uniforms beckon loudly for customers. We hop onto one of the signature corresponding blue taxis that line the sidewalk and a strong peppermint oil aroma immediately hits me. My eyes squint at the smell. I continue to sweat profusely as the taxi is small and packed full. I am literally squished between my mum and sister, like a slice of meat in a sandwich. I lean forward across the clammy legs of my sister to reach for the small window and some air. Outside, the air is still muggy and hot which doesn't relieve heat of the car. The beeping, honking swarm of small rampaging motorcycles makes the everyday music of the city. The ever-flowing maze of congested traffic does not stop for anyone, there are cars bumper to bumper nudging bikes, bikes nudging cars and vehicles pressing into pedestrians, like one big circle of life.

"Vé số, vé số!", lottery sellers emphatically cry out for customers, amongst the cacophony of the motorcycles. The metal wheel rattles of the late-night cyclo act as the percussion of the city as drivers transport tourists around the busy, bustling streets for a single dollar. Rapidly throwing crunched up metal cans into big, black trash bags, can collectors work like machines in the sleazy streets. Old frail, bony beggars hobble around like the dirty rakes of the streets and beg for money. As our taxi slowly leaves the poor, seedy area of Ho Chi Minh, small dirty concrete houses make way for tall grey buildings and shopping centres.

Large billboards stare down from above. International brands such as Gong Cha,

Starbucks, Dominos and Burger King have enlarged, exaggerated stores and signs, two times the typical size of those in first world countries. Young girls around the age of 18 or 20 wear the typical Vietnamese preppy red lipstick as they step in and out shops sipping from Starbucks cups and clutching H&M shopping bags.

Our taxi takes a right turn, and soon we are out of the shopping centre area. The narrow street is filled with all types of cafes, restaurants and street food corners all hunched up next to each other. The busy street food sellers peddle all kinds of traditional, Vietnamese dishes from both the northern and southern regions, from the well-known pho bo to the famous dish of the streets, cá cơm Kho. Tourists with large backpacks finish their bowls clean, leaving their money bills on the table. Local men sitting on red plastic chairs, toast their beer bottles while their spicy goat hot pot is bubbling. A mother feeds her toddler a small piece of meat with her orange chopsticks. The owner of a street food corner stirs the big metal pot of bubbling broth of the pho with her ladle while tasting it. Night and day, this is the norm.

The fishy, spicy odour of cá cơm kho enters the taxi through the open window, filling it with the tangy, herby smell of fresh lemongrass, coriander, Thai basil, bird's eyes chilli and mint. It is what makes pho am thuc, the street of food. Restaurant hands are busy at work at every street food corner, chopping the principal herbs, coriander and mint, for every dish. Large, dominating neon flickering signs announce each shop's speciality and name. I am famished, tired and sleepy. My mouth salivates at the enticing smells. Shaky and hungry, I would disembark the taxi for any food.

We finally decide to eat at the famous #1 Saigon pho bo restaurant. The small restaurant is packed full of hungry customers, both locals and tourists. Waiters frantically run up and down taking orders. Restaurant hands and chefs work side by side swiftly chopping herbs, slicing meat, and plating for every order. The sizzle and pop of the woks, the bang of the kitchen cleavers and the murmuring chatter of the chefs and restaurant hands are well coordinated as one choreographed dance in the shared space.

At once, a waiter approaches us and brings us to table 35 at the very back of the restaurant. A prepared plate of fresh bean sprouts, cilantro, Thai basil, limes, sliced chilli peppers awaits us at the table, ready to accompany the pho bo. After a couple of minutes, the waiter comes back and serves us with bowls of steaming hot soup. The bowl of

pho bo is filled to the brim with a rich, beefy broth, fine, homemade noodles and thinly sliced beef with the finishing touch of chopped up pieces of onion and coriander. I add some additional bean sprouts and squeeze a lime in for the final tangy touch. The spicy chilli of the broth tingles at the back of my mouth, and the savoury tang of the pho is just perfect with the amount of acidity. The thinly sliced beef and noodles are tender, not too tough or too soft with the right texture that my mouth wants to come back for more.

We are finally full and ready to head back to the

nearby hotel that our uncle has reserved on 88 Yên Thế, Phường 2, Quận Tân Bình. The hotel is brightly lit and inviting. The building's black marble front looms. It has several levels and a Victorian French architecture style. White Victorian style pots adorn the black marble stair entrance, holding flowers and shrubs. As we ascend the black marble stairs, one of the female staff members in a blue ao dai (traditional Vietnamese dress) with the hotel's name approaches the glass door and slowly opens it. She warmly greets us, "Chào mừng bạn đến Blue Sky Hotel." (Welcome to Blue Sky Hotel). ■



Isabelle Refalo

Year 12 · Nazareth College

My artwork has a theme of Climate Change and how important it is to respect our environment. The subject matter of a mother polar bear and her cub fighting for survival.



Cindy Nguyen
Year 12 · Nazareth College

My artworks have a strong message of self-respect, self-worth, dreams, hopes and a struggle with mental health. The subject matter features a girl on a journey of self-discovery.

JUDGING IS FAR FROM RESPECTING

Jemma Brodie · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Every time you and I observe someone we are being judgemental. Meaning that every time we analyze anyone's words, actions or emotions we are doing what is defined as "displaying an overly critical point of view." We make claims about one another oblivious to the fact that we are observing them in an unjust way. There's a lack of respect for people when we walk around and feel disapproving eyes glaring at us. We constantly feel judged. I am so sick of people telling us who we are because of the way look and act. How is that showing respect to anyone? You may ask yourself this question and it is a heartbreaking answer... We aren't showing respect. When we are judging others and shining a negative light on them we are not valuing them in any way.

People may question who is the most judgmental person they know. They are unaware of the fact that they themselves are turning into that person. This is without them realizing just how cruel this is. I wonder... Why are we in a society, where being judgmental is a natural instinct for the vast majority of the population? Whether people know what you are thinking about them or not, it is still a shameful act. Concluding any information about someone is demoralizing and disrespectful, yet we do it without even realizing it. I have it in myself to admit I have judged people before, and I have labelled them in a way where I assumed that they were rude people, but I was mistaken. What was unbeknown to me previously, was that judging people is like stripping them of all their dignity and shredding it.

Imagine yourself walking into school and hearing the sound of crying because someone is being

teased. This person being antagonized is curled up in the corner of the library crying her eyes out. All this girl was doing was just reading for pleasure. Yet bullies believed that because of the fact that this girl was reading she was a nerd. You should feel sorry for that girl because she was doing what she loved and she was getting teased for it. The worst part of this scenario is, that you might have thought this yourself about someone you know. This illustrates how little respect we exhibit to one another, and how quick people are to judge each other.

The primary question is why are people so judgmental? Yes, there is a lot of psychological reasoning behind why humans are wired in such a way that we naturally judge others. I believe though, that there's more to it than that. It's because we are all imperfect humans. We feel the need to observe other's flaws or features to make ourselves feel better, and that is judging each other. I think it could be impossible for us all to stop judging entirely, so instead of judging others in a negative way, attempt to respect one another or judge others in a positive way. We have all gone through hell or trauma during different situations. So show some respect to that girl who was reading because she could be an incredible author and your harsh thoughts shouldn't stop her from achieving her dreams. That girl with the blonde hair who cares deeply about the environment, respect her because she could be the next great activist. Respect that girl with the green eyes as she could have battled mental health issues. So instead of judging others in a rude way or rating them. Think again, because they might be doing or have done... Something extraordinary. ■

THE DAY THE WAR CAME HERE

Tilly Fleming · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Sounds of war echo through my ears,
As one by one my comrades fall, I suddenly feel
fear.

War is no longer lingering, far enough away
War has come, and it came here.

I hear horns of battle, the order to attack,
Screams of anguish harmonize, as my people are
cut back.

Canes and staffs pound repeatedly on the cool,
hard, solid ground,
My blood boils as I hear them, a single, chilling,
CRACK.

Heavy horses hooves pound upon the earth,
No trace of the friends, that I once knew no trace
of smiling mirth,
People are now serious, they're fighting for their
lives,

For here is where the people show, what they're
really worth.

The aftermath of battle is perhaps the worst of
all,

Where we relive the desperate moments, where
eventually, they all fall.

The field is littered with spears and pikes, like
claws or animal fangs.

I look down with a sickening, disgust, where a
body, there does sprawl.

Sounds of sorrow, echo through my ears,
Every time I reply the scenes, once again, I do feel
fear,

The threat may have left, it may have gone away,
But I remember, the very day, the war, it came
right here. ■

FROZEN BY THE FEAR

Maya Soha · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

As still as a bare tree on a Winter's day,
As cold as concrete that never received the
sunlight's ray,

The snow was poison, it took only one icy drop,
As soon as it touched bare skin your heart would
stop,

As empty as those streets, where no one would go,
As lonely as the crumpled dead leaves on the old
cobble road,

The thick smoke from the chimney was like air
sent from hell,

As abandoned as the home with that smoke's
deadly smell,

Now, no more small children frolicking around,
Playing hopscotch down that winding track,

The town was frozen, since many centuries ago,
And till this day for them there is no coming back. ■



Ellen Collins
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College



Charli Levy
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Hannah Manders
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Madeline Brown
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Mikaila Lacey
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Mikaila Lacey
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Trinity Le
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Gemma O'Donnell
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Tahlia Taylor White
Year 9 · Aquinas College

ENOUGH IS ENOUGH

Anita Mugamu · Year 12 · Aquinas College

Letter to the editor written in response to an editorial on horse racing

The ABC's 7:30 report is evidence enough that we all need to say #NupToTheCup. Talk about making racing 'ethical and sustainable' won't cut it anymore. Abolishing horse racing means two things – freedom for animals, and freedom for people.

Here's the life cycle of a racehorse. Though it isn't fully mature until five or six years old, at the tender age of two, a horse is put onto the track where they're bound to experience injury. Then, when they're no longer fit for racing, the horse has a clear destination – a dog's breakfast. Think of Cliffsofmoher, who broke his shoulder in the first moments of the race in 2018. Euthanised, he became another victim of 'the race that stops the nation'. It's not fair that the lives of these gorgeous creatures are turned into a game, training for a sport they were never built to do. The wastage is not worth it.

Going to the Cup isn't so great either.

What is seemingly a chance to dress up and go out

with friends most often turns into a disastrous day. With a 17% increase in domestic violence on the day, women find themselves worse off post-event due to the overwhelming majority of intoxicated punters. The Cup is praised for being an Aussie tradition in which we celebrate our national identity, but it's just an excuse to take advantage of others. If institutionalised drunkenness, betting and abuse is part of the national identity, then we need to seriously reconsider what it means to be Australian.

There are clear signs that the Cup is not something to be tolerated anymore. The exploitation of animals and humans alike is immoral and cannot be justified through history, or entertainment, or financial gain or glory. I hope the racing industry feels the pressure, and that the government is not only relentless in scrutinising their practises, but realises the impact of racing on the lives of horses and people.

I'm not one to take the long weekend off in early November. Removing the public holiday from the picture would be a good start. That would send the message that this poor excuse of a carnival needs to end. ■



Rachel Lai Sang, Gemma O'Donnell
Year 9 · Aquinas College

THE DEAD BRANCH

Alexandra Carson · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

A creative piece based on the novel, 'Diving into Glass' by Caro Llewellyn

This dead branch for an arm has followed me around like a bad smell for over 22 years now and you would think after that long, I'd have managed to interpret why I still got sympathy glances followed by a quick turn away of baby blue guilt. Well, I haven't. I always feel like screaming 'I made the sculpture that you all stand and stare at in Rundle Mall!' but I restrain myself because that would be very deep red of me and there's always been something hateful about deep red.

I should probably explain my absurd and rather unnecessary use of colours. In short, polio changed my thinking. I don't know whether it is a blessing or a curse just yet but everything I not only see but feel, think and hear is in colour. Take 'Imagine' by John Lennon for example, top of the charts at the moment. It's undeniably but unexplainably a shade of lilac.

As Betty, my wife, continued to swerve around the backstreets of Adelaide like a madwoman, I prepared myself for not only the night ahead but the dreaded morning hangover which was always going to be fairly significant after dinner at Jill and Richard's. We pulled up with a screech of the brakes, Betty looked at me with her brown eyes as indulgent as honey – a beautiful warm pink she was. We walked towards the Llewellyn's home gallery for yet another dinner party in celebration of their 83rd show opening the following evening.

I knocked on the door rhythmically, as I usually do to please the little one, Caro I believe her name was. She ran to the door, the pitter-patter of her 8-year-old feet followed by a timid "Hi Bert and Betty" almost overpowered by the screech of the fly screen door swinging open as she welcomed us in. She had a happiness about her, but not a warm yellow like the sun, more of an artificial, fluorescent yellow. The type of unnatural additive they never labelled on the box, but it was ever so present, the type they tried to hide with some long chemical no one could say. Jill screamed perfect hostess as usual in her red miniskirt and violet, tight, polo neck sweater as she greeted us with a glass of wine, one in each hand.

The mass of alcohol that had been consumed was unimaginable. The beer and wine bottles lined up in the corner of the kitchen accumulated gradually as the laughing got louder and the conversations became more slurred and unintelligible. I had an interview the following morning, so I was certainly not as bad as anyone else in the room which was always an interesting viewpoint. We left the dining table behind and made our way to the living room

as the James Taylor record was played yet again at full volume. Jill wheeled Richard across to the side of the couch and danced around the living room with a cigarette in hand. As she thanked everyone in the room for coming through slurred, confused words, she not once looked at Richard the way Betty looked at me in the perfect shade of pink. In fact, she had avoided Richard ever since being a few drinks in. It was as though someone removed the stage direction for her to act with love and compassion towards her husband, so she simply did not do it. She turned from the pink life of the party she was as she gradually became a deep shade of depressing blue upon consumption of more alcohol.

As the lethal cigarette smoke consumed any ounce of oxygen still fighting for life in the room, I decided to find a breath of fresh air. I shut the hallway door behind me as I headed for the back door leading to the garden, the James Taylor songs slipping through the cracks of the door as I shut it as quietly as possible as to not wake Hugh and Caro. The picture frame on the wall held a photo of Jill and the kids and had obviously been knocked onto a slant. As I slid it off its hook to reposition it, beneath the frame revealed the imperfection of the wall, a crack covered entirely by the frame when positioned correctly. A shade of grey. I continued towards the back garden when I passed the hallway table holding a green vase full of withered tulips. Something you would never find in the living room. They wilted in a darker shade of grey but I could not pinpoint where all of this grey in my head was coming from. My head fogged into every shade of it as I noticed all the doors in the hallway were shut. It was as though the murky greens, drab browns and dull blues of the rampant secrets of this house were swept under the doors for no one to see but the family. The grey was the confusion. The deception that was this happy household.

Having had enough air, I walked back into the room full to the brim with carbon dioxide and intoxicated adults acting like children. The ashtrays were overflowing but I snagged a cigarette to relieve the fact that my dead arm was feeling especially heavy being weighed down by the fact that I had just exposed the 'perfect family' that was the Llewellyn's.

They were lying.

The secrets swept into the crevices, the imperfections hidden with pieces of art and bright miniskirts, the loveless marriage masked by perfect parties whilst the flowers wilted and the children suffered.

This house was the deepest red I have ever felt. ■

THE SWITCH

Charlie Prichard · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

A creative piece based on the novel, 'Diving into Glass' by Caro Llewellyn

You could see it in her desolate blue eyes: the act of acrimony that was about to be performed. The scene flickered and then disappeared in the deep channel that was her sapphire eyes. Caro sat in her large wooden chair, her meagre body hardly filling out the vast space, and her back pushing up against the solid wood as an attempt to grow to the height of her mother, sitting peacefully beside her. Caro's eyes kept to her thick, greasy lump of lamb and scattered peas, as they became colder on her plate. The rectangular table forced us to sit close to each other, despite how far apart we truly felt. I remained at the head of the table; Becky on my right, Jill on my left, Caro and Hugh sitting opposite each other. A smell lingered beneath our noses. It wasn't the perfume exhaled by babyface flowers planted in a decorative vase, of which was found at a garage sale. It wasn't the odour of a rubbery chunk of meat sitting on a delicate plate, which was carefully placed alongside systematized cutlery. It wasn't the aroma of ripened oranges that sat tranquilly on the far end of a table. It was the stale and indignant smell of revenge. Caro repositioned herself next to her mother, counting down the minutes until the disintegration.

She flinched as Jill reached into the middle of the table to cut into the specimen of lamb, moving some back to her plate. Along with Caro, Becky must have gathered my unease, because she put a

comforting hand on my tray, of which I responded by placing my hand atop hers. I witnessed Caro shoot an eyes-wide-brows-lifted look to her brother sitting across the table. A sweep of an arm was all it took for Jill to clear the table, smashing anything in her path. A blink of an eye was all it took to miss it. I couldn't help but stare at Caro as it all unfolded. The sheer terror in her eyes as she witnessed her mother now stabbing the carving knife into my portrait behind my wheelchair. It wasn't as though my wife was slaughtering me, but she was injuring her own child. Instead of blood shed from the wounds in the portrait, tears were shed from the ocean of Caro's eyes.

She watched, helplessly, plastered to the immense chair as her mother finally broke, unable to grasp what was truly occurring. She perched, watching as though a savage beast had just jumped out from under the table, tearing up anything in its path. Tearing up anyone in its path. With each slash, Caro became more and more impaired. We were both impaired; paralysed. Paralysed to the fact that the mother and wife we both knew, was under some sort of spell, that possessed no antidote. Paralysed and unable to move. The sadness in my daughter's eyes wasn't due to the fact that the tireless effort put toward setting the table was perfectly futile, but it was due to the thought that her mother had officially boiled over. The flaws were always there, despite us ignoring them. Caro appreciated that her mother had finally and eternally flipped the switch. ■

MYSTIKO

Georgia Yeo · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Imagined Greek Goddess Myths ‘

The sun glistened in the sky and coloured the mountains yellow,
It radiated from high up while I stood behind a willow.
My fingers touched the vibrant green leaves,
But they turned brown and crumpled like there were autumn thieves.

I pulled my hooded cloak up and marched into the shimmering light,
Preparing myself for its harmful bite.
The shadow beside me flowed to the glaring sun
And the inky world of twinkling stars had won.
A fresh wind started and rustled the winter trees,
The goddess of mystery smiled and spread her secrets in the breeze. ■

ALIA

Alannah Crowhurst · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

As a young girl I was quite lost,
Surrounded by seas of pictures and confusion,
Then one day the sun fell into my hands,
And it was as if thousands of letters from the sky
rained down with it.

I had been called by a higher power,
My heart beat faster than the wind,
My passion for words is like a waterfall,
They simply pour out of me, never stop flowing.

After centuries of guiding people through stories
and poetry,
It was time to take my influences elsewhere.
A young boy named William Shakespeare,
In whom I saw much of my own young self,

Called out to the gods for a larger meaning to his
life,
And I answered.

Paper and poetry and plays,
The world thrived off the words I provided it,
Words connected people far and wide,
If only they knew when and where to speak the
right ones.

My gift is unimaginable,
Because the passionate words I feel flow through
my soul,
And everything dies eventually,
But never stories.

Because words don't die. ■

A REFLECTION ON *FOLLOW THE SUN* BY XAVIER RUDD

Brigitte De Mamiel · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

The song made me feel calm and relaxed almost like a trance when you are just so focused on what the video is showing you. The way his voice sounded meshed perfectly with the music and that made it smooth and sound amazing. The first way it pays respect to the Indigenous people is through photos and videos of them doing what they love and showing their culture.

“Dream with care” could be meaning when you dream of what you want in life, think

about people other than yourself and who you could hurt to get there.

“Tomorrow is a new day for everyone” pays respect because the artist could have said tomorrow is a new day but he specifically said everyone including Indigenous people.

“And remember your place” supports Indigenous people and pays his respects because it is aiming to the point that everyone is equal. It offers hope because it is saying that we should be equal now not enemies. ■

A MOMENT IN TIME

Daniel Harrak · Year 9 · Mazonod College

As a ray of sunlight shone through the crack of the window, now sealed shut by the virus, and the line of dust that lay dormant on the windowsill was ruffled, now visible. I opened the tattered, stained curtain to see the world the only way I could now. Guards were dragging people off the streets to a place feared by many, and people were fighting each other for some of the basic necessities of life. I've never seen such disrespect displayed for one another, especially during a crisis like this. It's amazing what you see when you have a birds eye view. My world has turned to chaos. Our government has adopted draconian policies that have led to many people's disappearance and I am stuck in my apartment watching this monstrosity unfold. My life has changed and I don't know if I'll wake up in the same bed that I lay my head on the night before. Life's been tough since dad died and there's only so much a single mother can do for her child while they're locked up inside their tiny apartment, with only a single window to look through. My world has turned to chaos and it's hard to look on the brightside when surrounded by darkness.

The musky smell of the damp roof caving from last night's storm is sickening and the wallpaper draping away reveals the mould behind it. This apartment used to just be a place to sleep but now it is a full time home and it isn't ready for that. I used to play around with the children down the road and visit grandma for lunch on a Sunday afternoon. We would sit outside and listen to the birds chirping their signature sound, and the children laughing in the park, and the clouds parting for the sun to shine a single crack of light on us, letting us feast with her with the little time we have left. However, that seems like a world away with the amount of time that we have been cooped up inside. I now have a newfound respect for the little things in life, for I and many others have taken advantage of the luxuries of life and now that they are gone, it feels incomplete.

Fortunately, it is not the end of the world. Although I miss my family and friends with all my heart and the worst within some have erupted, that doesn't

represent everyone. At the same time, looking through the cracked glass window and pulling back that old, tattered curtain, I see a different side of humanity, a selfless and respectful one. It's amazing what you can see when you have a birds eye view. People are helping each other off the street, even though there is no benefit to them. People are dropping off food and other supplies to the front of the houses of those who can't afford to risk it. Now more than ever, there is a greater respect for the essential service workers.

They say that extraordinary situations bring out both the best and the worst in people. This statement is mostly true. However, it seems as though the world has gone in the right direction. Although there are many deaths all across the globe and the virus is only just settling down in some countries, this will all be over soon. If people just stay strong and respect each other's health, safety and wellbeing, then the end of this tragedy will move into view and this veneer of a postlapsarian world will fade away, revealing the prelapsarian society that could be.

Although I'm just a child stuck watching this unfold, I have finally caught sight of what the world has become. People can look at the world however they want and judge it as they please, but until they take a hard look at it with open eyes, they will never see the good in people. When I look at the world the only way I can, I could look at the far left, the people letting loose and doing whatever they want with a complete disrespect for others. However, I could also look at the people on the right, the people helping each other, staying safe, respecting the restrictions in place and respecting the safety, health and wellbeing of themselves and others, because they know that by doing this, they will be helping, not only themselves, but society go to a new normal. I know who I want to look at and I know how I want to view the world, for there will always be people who let greed and power get the better of them, breeding and spreading negativity. Yet there are good people in this world who respect each other and the people around them, the people who see the world the way I do. ■

FROM TURMOIL TO TRIUMPH

Herbie Fischbacher · Year 9 · Mazenod College

The Australian Oxford Dictionary defines respect as “a deep admiration for someone or something elicited by their abilities, qualities and achievements”. As such, respect is not a right. It is earned through hard work and effort. Often people in high positions of power earn respect through their representation of a group, state or nation. It hence follows that sports people that represent their country have abilities and qualities in their chosen sport and have worked hard to achieve their position, and in turn have earned respect for their place in society.

As we all know, Australians are avid followers of sport and as a Commonwealth nation, Australians are particularly passionate about cricket and the Australian Men’s Cricket Team (“AMCT”). It can be said that the wellbeing of our cricket team is integral to the wellbeing of every Australian. In 2018, three players, including the captain, Steve Smith, and Vice-Captain, David Warner, brought this feeling of wellbeing to an absolute halt, by making one of the worst decisions they could ever make. One that would not only affect them, but also their teammates and further, the reputation of all Australian cricketers and supporters.

Who knew a small piece of sandpaper could cause the downfall of three talented, international cricket players, the Australian team coach and the reputation of a country. Smith and Warner were banned for twelve months, while the other player involved, opening batsman Cameron Bancroft, was banned for nine months. The scandal involved the use of sandpaper to enhance the ability for the cricket ball to swing, which is a very unfair advantage to have as the fielding side. The banning of two world-class players and one inexperienced, young player seemed to destroy their careers. Further to this, Australian coach Darren Lehmann and Cricket Australia CEO James Sutherland quit while the scandal was at its peak, and companies withdrew their sponsorships in the team, leaving Cricket Australia scrambling to deal with an international cricket and media storm.

Newly appointed coach Justin Langer, and captain Tim Paine, were left to deal with a team whose reputation was left in tatters. With an inexperienced team at hand, Australia ventured to England, only to get beaten five to nil in an ODI series. This series was a wake up call to the coaching panel that there was a lot of work to do in rebuilding the reputation and skill of a previously successful team.

This incident had a profound effect on a wider range of people than anybody could have expected. The three players immediately involved

were affected poorly, as they lost sponsorships and contracts, as well as being booed relentlessly when they eventually re-joined the team. Additionally, the rest of the team was tarred with the same brush. Despite all this, the worst effect was the loss of respect from the Australian public. The AMCT is an integral part of Australian culture, a team that is so influential to aspiring cricketers and supporters, young and old. Cheating is un-Australian and the behaviour of the players involved was un-Australian. More so, the players were not using their own abilities and therefore did not deserve respect. The AMCT became synonymous with the drama that came with the sandpaper scandal.

To quote Titus O’Reilly’s *A Sporting Chance*, “it ticked all four factors [of] a big crisis. It affected a lot of people, it had big consequences, it had amazing footage and ... it had inflammatory timing and context.”

The AMCT would be able to win back respect through commitment. The players and coaching panel would have to persevere through the difficult task they were faced with and admit to a change in team culture since the scandal. The AMCT would have to start winning using their abilities and exhibit qualities such as hard work and persistence that had traditionally earned them the respect of the Australian public.

To start the bounce back, I believe that a five-match away ODI series in India in March 2019 retrieved a degree of respect for the AMCT. After losing the opening two matches of the series, Australia exhibited a huge amount of commitment and effort to win the final three matches and secure a historic series win. Each player showed their qualities and abilities in being able to defeat a strong opponent.

The test series against England, known as ‘the Ashes’, was to be the real test to see if Australia had pulled itself back together to the standard of international cricket. Australia had to defeat a strong team away from home. Australia was able to draw a well-fought series 2-2 and retained the urn, on the back of a man-of-the-series performance from Smith, who truly proved to the Australian public that he deserved the respect of the Australian public through his perseverance and ability. Unfortunately, Warner and Bancroft did not perform as well, and this left their position in the team in doubt.

Coming back to Australia, Warner and Smith were still in the team. With the selectors supporting the idea that Warner would perform much better in home conditions, they kept him at the top of the

order. The selectors' theory would soon be proved correct as Warner made an unbeaten 335 at the Adelaide Oval against Pakistan in the second test of the series, earning back some personal respect.

Furthermore, the Aussies improved the reputation of the team by allowing the international cricketing community to see the hard work and change in culture, by allowing a camera crew behind the scenes to observe the mass changes that were made at Cricket Australia. The Test documentary series is an eight-episode series explaining in detail the pathway from the scandal to retaining the Ashes in England in mid-2019. The public could now see the hard work, the failures and successes, and the perseverance the players and officials showed to push through the hardship they were initially faced with. It also proved that they now truly deserved the respect of all Australians.

Consequently, I believe the AMCT has won back the respect of the Australian public. The amount of work put into the team to juggle a mix between younger and more experienced players to improve the quality of the team while trying to work on the team reputation is simply extraordinary. To come from being in financial doubt through sponsorship losses and without key talent, to rank first in the world in tests and t20 internationals less than twelve months after the return of the three banned players is an extraordinarily quick and most effective turnover. The Australian public have a reason to respect the AMCT, as they are winning again and are currently in their best phase of the last fifteen years. The AMCT has turned turmoil to triumph. ■

RESPECT

Jayden Nguyen · Year 9 · Mazenod College

What is respect? Who do I respect? Why is respect so important?

These are questions that I ask myself about respect. It is such a strong word with many powerful and different meanings. **What is respect?** Respect is the deep feeling of admiration that you have for someone. It is the positive feeling that you have towards someone important to you, whether you know them or not. Someone you respect could be someone that you admire deeply from their actions, success or the way that they live and treat one another.

Who do I respect? There are many people that I respect and don't respect because of their actions and personality. I respect the important people in my life, such as my parents, siblings, grandparents, and all of the family that I have who I know have my back. I respect my teachers, who put in the work to ensure that I have the proper education that I need to succeed in the future. I respect my coaches, who constantly help me improve so that I can become the best player that I can be. I respect my peers, and I respect their ideas, whether or not I agree with them. During this difficult time, I respect the people who are going out of their way to help people in need, medical workers, and volunteers who are helping people in isolation.

Why is respect important? In my eyes, respect should be the main priority of the world, because it creates peace with people and helps us avoid conflict with one another. If you want someone to respect you, you must learn to respect them as well. You cannot expect someone to respect you if you don't respect them back. As we grow older, it is crucial to feel respected by the people important to us, because it teaches us how to be respectful towards others. It teaches us the ability to accept somebody for who they are, no matter how different they are. From a young age, it is important to understand that respect in relationships can lead to trust safety and wellbeing. RESPECT. It is a powerful word which only means something if you show it. ■



Emilia Nguyen
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Riley Wells
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Emma Robinson
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—————
Elmer the Elephant



Holly Severino
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MY DAY OFF

Chloe Vigilante · Year 9 · Emmaus College

The day was young, and the birds awoke. The forceful breeze gave a biting chill to the air and the sun, almost non-existent, gave a soft glow to the busy town. Streets flooded with cars and people busily wandered along the sidewalks with coats, beanies and large cosy scarves on them to keep warm. Monday was a busy workday for many people, but not for me. Today was my day off. A day to be free and to do exactly what I wanted.

My job wasn't that hard really. I sat outside all day and occasionally ate some food and drank water if I was starving. Some days were harder than others, and sometimes I'd have to chase down bigger jobs than usual. But not today. The winter breeze made my large ears feel like they were frozen and whistled through the town as my siblings Mollie and Joe led me to my favourite place.

Through loud people, through loud cars, horns beeping from all directions, the wind so strong it would pull me back and the occasional trip here and there over a shoe or a curve in the concrete. My heart bouncing up and down in my chest not only from pure excitement, but stress. I had no idea what I was walking through, but the familiar smells of car fumes, the winter air, Mollie's perfume, and the fish and chip shop gave me the estimation of how close we were. I trusted Mollie with all my soul. I have lived with Mollie and Joe for four years now in our old little home just across from the mall. It took me a while to settle in, but after a few months, it felt just like home. My real family were split up when I was born, and now, I don't think I will ever see them again. At least for a very long time.

I knew as soon as we arrived at our destination. The floor turned to a softer moister surface where the concrete turned to a slippery mush, and the sound of the busy people and cars drifted away. I jumped up and down before Mollie and Joe gave me the okay to run. And believe me, I ran. Again, this all was so familiar to me and I had been to this place for years, but I still had no idea what I was passing through. I tried smelling for the lush green grass that was usually there in summer, but instead I breathed in ice. Legitimately ice, until I coughed and spluttered and stumbled back.

After I found my bearings, I continued to run, and my heart bounced up and down like a rabbit on steroids. The sound of cars and horns slowly began to disappear, and the scent of Mollie and Joe had drifted. The ground became soft and difficult to walk upon and the breeze blew fiercely. I slowed down. Had I run too far? Did I even know where

I was? I started to pant and try to remember the direction I had ran in. I called out for Mollie and Joe, but I got no call back in response. I was lost.

I started to panic. Where on Earth had I run to. Why can't I smell Mollie? Am I in the correct place? Will I get home? I didn't know. The smells soon became unfamiliar and my chest sunk heavily, so I chose a direction, and ran.

As I ran as fast as my legs could take me, the cold winter air fought against my face and made my tongue turn dry and my face go numb. I ran and called out for anyone to save me until I started to sink. I tried to keep my head up as my fatigued legs started to give in. My body continued to sink, and it became even harder to run, let alone walk. I called out for the last time until my head was fully under. I tried jumping up to let my head free, but it was useless. I was now colder than before and was surrounded by a soft frozen glug that was colder than I remembered. The wind had now faded and the scents that I had smelt just not long ago had completely disappeared. Calling out was impossible and all I could hear was my own heavy breathing and the frozen pool I was running through brush past my ears. I panted. Breathing became more difficult. My legs began to give in. I started to slow down.

I pushed my legs as hard as I could. My head was almost above the soft layer of glug once again. I hear a soft echo coming from my east. It sounded like Joe. I wasn't sure. But at that point, I didn't care who it was. I was going to die. I pushed even harder now with a hope that I could be saved. My mouth lifted above the soft slush and I yelped for help. My head then went down under beginning to sink again. The echo began to get louder now. It was Joe. I continued to push with my legs as the voice got even closer. Again, I managed to get my head above the soft frozen slush and yelp once more. I smelt Mollie and Joe; they were near. Footsteps were coming closer. I continued to peddle with my feet trying to push my body against and above the stubborn sinking glug until I was picked up. Finally. After a gasp of air, the smell made me completely sure. It was Mollie and Joe. They found me.

"Bruiser, are you okay?" Mollie asked.

Joe placed me down and took out my lead. "Don't run that far ever again." As he said this, he clipped my lead onto my collar and gave me a pat. Maybe going out into the snow isn't a good idea for a dog. A blind one anyway. ■

PRESENCE

Efraimia Damatopolis · Year 9 · Emmaus College

I meticulously align my decorative photo frames, in my pristine, white glass cabinet, where my bag and pink satin ballet shoes dangle from either side. Snapshots taken in time, Mum always beside me, my large, blue crystal eyes gazing at her with sheer delight. Glancing at the photos of Mum always brings me such a heartening tingle. My chestnut curls reflected in the glass, my Mum's blonde hair in the mirror behind me, as she straightens a beachside painting on my wall. I take such pride in creating my bedroom haven to be aesthetically pleasing- a resemblance of an idyllic world or perhaps, a projection of my Mum's fastidiousness.

I toss my fluffy slippers into the air, landing faultlessly together like a synchronised swimming act. My plush, rose colored robe, flows swiftly around my body, as I pirouette around my room. Mum standing there directing me to straighten my posture and elevate my leg higher, while doing an arabesque. I embrace my passion for ballet, for it allows me to escape to a place of inner peace, a way of putting everything behind me.

Breathlessly panting, I plunge onto my soft fluffy quilt covered bed. My body collapses down, like a hot air balloon upon landing. Resting my weary head on a cluster of beautifully adorned pillows, as a cherub nestled on puffy, white clouds. I gaze upwards at my white, fairy lights flowing throughout my room. It is a constellation of the Milky Way, taking me to a place of unattainable and incomprehensible, wonder and awe, Mum lying beside me smiling.

I recall our own special camping trip a couple of years ago in summer, as we marveled at the night sky and beheld the vastness of the universe. Although our plans were cancelled, Mum cleverly suggested we camp outside in the backyard instead. We cuddled up together under a warm furry blanket, sipping our hot chocolates. The glow from our confined, small bonfire radiated onto our faces, while we toasted our marshmallows onto the crackling fire. It was a place of comfort, security and serenity. A place I always longed for, filled with safety and acceptance.

Laughter filled the air, as we shared stories of our mishaps as the sun set. Chuckling at the memory, Mum expressed an incident during her awkward teenage years. She blurted out a time when she sneezed out some unpleasant contents into her favourite red knitted gloves. Her childhood crush

standing before her. Giggling at the thought... as she remembered the boys bewildered face, his eyes fixated upon her hair. She had accidentally smeared mucus onto her hair. Overwhelmed with embarrassment, her face was more red than her gloves. She made me laugh. Her playful side revealed her inner childlikeness. As the night skies darkened, in the still of the night, Mum revealed her childhood fears and hopes. Looking at her fondly, I felt a sense of connectedness and relatedness.

I vividly remember crossing the busy beach road, the sky a crisp vivid blue. A light breeze swaying my Mum's blonde curls, as they gently swept over my shoulder, like soft feathers fluttering on my skin. The crystal blue sea far in the distance. How instantly things can change. My Mum clenching my hand ever so tightly, her calming words uttered from her lips, directing my eyes to the distant seaside instead. Crowds flocking to the scene. Her firm embrace comforting me, reassuring me with soothing words, that everything would be alright. The siren of the ambulance piercing through the air, shattering the once picturesque moment before our eyes.

She passes by my room, smiling ever so lovingly. Her signature scent of her vanilla perfume, wafting through my room, her ever present trails, as she scrupulously cleans the home. The constant, tinkling sounds echoing down the hallway. The vacuum cleaner pausing intermittently while she drags the furniture around, in the bedrooms – my room next in line. This was the same vacuum cleaner that caused us so much frustration, when presented with a myriad of choices at the store. Baffled at all the choices, she flippantly suggested we both have a pedicure instead. As we enjoyed a lavish pampered pedicure, I blissfully looked at her with joy. Later we waddled out of the salon with our fluorescent, disposable flip flops, delighted at our vibrant coloured nails.

I grab my ballet bag and shoes and tenderly tuck my gold locket safely underneath my jacket, close to my heart. It always fills me with such fond and loving memories and an inextricable joy – my Mum's last gift to me before the tragic car accident when she died.

I keep on directing my eyes into the distant horizon, looking on with hope, as my Mum had guided me to do on the day of the accident. On the once idyllic busy beach road. ■



Lachlan Bell
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

Class Project – Canopy Tree Landscape



Owen Sestan
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

Class Project – Canopy Tree Landscape

RED BOOTS

Phillip Rafoo · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Joe was an ordinary man. If a child was asked to draw a man, they would have unintentionally drawn Joe. Eyes, nose, mouth. Joe was a stick figure, he had no discernible features, and no special qualities. From the eyes of an alien, he was a clone, indistinguishable from the rest.

Joe would start his day by tucking in his lacklustre suit, and beginning his commute to work. Joe's walk to work was not a skip through the sky, but rather resembled a colourless dragging of his feet.

Joe's workday would blend into the next. He was a person in bulk, with no end in stock. He was as good and as bad as the man in the next cubicle. If he were to depart, he would be replaced and only felt in the reports he had once written. Joe would be forced to work overtime, as is tradition for him. Staring at a glaring screen for hours on end made Joe's eyes sensitive, resulting in a constantly squinted Joe.

When Joe's work for the day was done he would walk home. The stretch of pathway towards Joe's house would be submerged in a murky mist; a sea of grey hue. The ground would be covered in a sparkle of red light that shone through the fog.

One such night as he walked through the mist, Joe noticed an abandoned fashion store. A pair of red leather boots shone and their allure appealed to Joe. His pupils expanded to take in more of its colours. The boots sparkled with a bright scarlet, opening the heart's hidden powers. Joe stood in amazement of this new colour, never once noticed by his own eyes. An untaught, instinctive action had him pick up the shoes. The colours began to

blur, and its fine details were distracted by capillary waves. The day ended.

When Joe walked to work the next day he was engrossed with his new avant-garde style. Red boots. The buildings and cars tried to get his attention but he was spellbound by the boots vivid blood-like colour. They grew on his senses and he developed a liking towards their flair.

When he arrived at his workplace, he pulled his head up to see its beautiful architecture. So thoughtfully made, so intricately designed. He had never realized how beautiful the building was.

As he entered his work building he saw his boss standing stiff.

"Joe! What took you!?" A silence proceeded.

"Well!" Joe said, "I walked today."

"You walk every day!" He didn't respond.

"Well you're here now. But I won't give you extra time to finish your reports on that thrift shop I shut down, I don't like to wait."

As the two made eye contact, Joe said in an assertive tone, "I'm already doing stuff, so don't expect the reports until later. Ask another person to finish it. Or, maybe you can finish it yourself."

Whatever his boss said afterwards barely mattered.

Joe sat in his cubicle with a new found honour, a rising pride. As Joe wrote on his computer, every word was perfect. From that day forward Joe lived through life with red boots. ■

THE CLIMB

Raphael Victoria · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Have you ever looked at yourself and thought,
“Who am I?”
You share your love with others but do you even
love yourself?
Being able to love, respect and have complete
faith in yourself,
will make the journey upon the mountain of love
and self-respect much easier.

At the start of the climb you assess yourself,
“Am I who I want to be?”
“What’s holding me back from being me?”
“What can I do better?”

You reflect and start the climb...
The higher you get, the more obstacles get in your
way.
Suddenly savage volcanoes erupt!
They deliver the main sources of your true
colours...
And what you’re hiding on the inside.

Your worries and insecurities are the falling rocks
but as you try to duck and weave,
they still somehow keep you down.
Your inner thoughts are the streams of lava
illuminating your figure,
crowding you with feelings you dare not let a soul
hear.

Your brain is then shocked as the clouds darken
the skies,
vicious thunder claps and lightning strike from
above.
You are forced to replay the distant memories you
thought were forgotten,
left in the past.

The endless terror and horror you had
experienced thus far helps you realise...
You are hurt, but not dead.
Your wounds have opened, but the blood that
seeps out is nothing but unfortunate.
You went through war against yourself, but came
out victorious.

And...in the midst and terror of it all,
you found peace.
You embraced the obstacles and stood tall.
You realised that you needed flaws in order to
thrive and prosper.
And finally,
you saw the worst of yourself and welcomed it
all.

The more you climb, the more hopeful thoughts
come to you.
With the fear and horror of the storms,
the rushing lava and meteor-like rocks,
came the calmness of the sun in the sky.
The cloudless view and bright blue sky.
The rough cliffs you were climbing on became
soft grass,
those sludges and streams of lava became
gracious flows of water.
And most importantly,
The positivity and happiness within yourself was
resurrected.
You had succeeded only the beginning of this
treacherous mountain,
but the sensation of relief gives you the
momentum to keep going...

Until now you ran away from your flaws because
you were afraid,
you hid them away because you wanted to make
it as if you were perfect.
This time you did not back down nor look the
other way.
You stared at your weaknesses straight in the eye
and welcomed it all.
You were not intimidated, but instead merciful
and tolerant!

In this living nightmare you found the flaws you
chose to run away from,
but through the joyousness and happiness
afterwards,
you found respect...
Respect for yourself. ■

THERE'S NO HARM IN TRYING

Rhaven Hao · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Sometimes I do feel like a failure. I feel like there's nothing for me, I feel like I'm always casted out, I feel like I don't *belong*. My face, my body, my voice, my features, my everything. Everything about me, it's all plain, there's nothing special. Each time I walk past someone, I immediately think that they're judging me with their friends or family, and even judge me from inside their head. Sometimes I'd wake up, look in the mirror, and just stare. Staring at all the flaws I have, staring and wishing I was someone else, staring hopelessly.

Hating and judging myself had become a habit for me. Clothes? Wear baggy ones, no one will realise how big you are with all those baggy clothes. Photos? Insist not to be in the photo so I don't ruin it. Compliments? Thank them, but don't believe it, every word coming out of their mouth is all just a facade. There was no way out.

"Why are you so quiet? Talk more! People will find you attractive that way." What's the point of being attracted to trash like me?

"You should fix yourself up more, you never wear cute clothes." What are cute clothes supposed to do to me? Make me happy?

"Maybe get a tutor, boys LOVE smart girls" Do I look like I want to get someone's attention?

"Why are you always alone? We're your friends, you know? What's the point of avoiding us? We're trying to help you!" Well where were you when I would cry in the middle of the night?

Where were you when everyone else came up to me to say I didn't fit in? Where were you when I actually needed help?

You're just friends with me to make yourself look good. "Be friends with the insecure one, they'll be your pawn and they'll never know." Actually, it's as clear as day that you're just using me. I'm plain and I may not be as smart as everyone else, but I

think I know what fake friends are when they're right in front of me.

Never have I ever felt accepted, until I realised that nothing will happen if I don't do something. So I try cutting people out of my life who make me feel useless, I reduce the negative thoughts. I begin to laugh and joke around even if they're talking behind my back, there's no reason for me to tell everyone how I feel. I won't ever tell anyone. I'm more comfortable keeping it to myself rather than someone feeling sorry for me and trying to understand me.

Each day, I'm trying, I really am. Every time I look at myself in the mirror, I take a deep breath and walk away. I won't benefit from looking in the mirror. Every time I pass someone, I continue to walk along, I don't know them so what's the point of trying to know what they think of me. I'll continue to hold everything in until I've fully accepted myself. I don't need to be in a relationship to be happy and accept myself, I just need to stop thinking about myself negatively and thank God and my parents for what they've given me.

I can go to where I want to go. I'm able to do activities and hobbies I find fun and interesting.

Eyes that may not be an ocean blue or a rare green, but they're brown and dark enough to blend in with my pupils, they're big enough and I have the not-so-common triple eyelid.

I have everything to help me get through life. Of course, at night it's different. However, I'm still happy to be able to let out my emotions through tears, because sometimes words aren't enough to release my insecurities.

So even if I *do* feel like a failure, like there's no hope for me, I'm not going to ever give up. I'll find the right people, I'll eventually find the right words, and I'll eventually be happy and finally learn to love myself and the people around me. ■

'CAUSE OF MY COLOUR

Rhealyn Lozada · Year 8 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

I cry myself to sleep,
thinking about the things that will always be so
deep.
I lost myself in the darkness,
when all the world is full of sadness.
'Cause of my colour, I am treated differently,
why can't others care gently?
I'm like the rest,
I have emotions that I feel on my chest.
Why can't we accept each other?
People dying because of one another.
I refuse to be confident and wear this mask,
I wake up every day like what's the new task?
My heart is full from all this pain,
I want to cry my eyes out like the rain.
Will someone please come help me and drain this?
I want to be happy and end all of this.

'Cause of my colour,
I am loved tragically.
When all I want is love and to live happily.
'Cause of my colour,
I am accused.
When all I do is nothing but get abused.
'Cause of my colour,
I stand tall.
When I hold people's hands and create a great
wall.
'Cause of my colour,
I know I am not like the rest.
When all I know is I am loved and stand proudly
for justice.
'Cause of my colour,
I am neglected.
When all I want to be is respected. ■



Amy Ruel
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Woman of Colour

Acrylic on Canvas

The many layers within are outside
for all to see.

LEAVES, TREES AND SCRATCHED KNEES

Sonany Istaifo · Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

A slight breeze rustles the autumn leaves, making them gently drop to the ground, one by one. Rays of sunlight strike through the canopy of trees, warming up the atmosphere. The park is covered with a blanket of flowers, birds are happily chirping, people are walking, and the wind is softly blowing.

The harmonious sounds of nature are interrupted by the loud chatter of two young boys. A female figure is tightly holding the hands of boys as they approach the bench in front of me. She seemed cross. As they sat down, the boys gazed into the sky, as if they were bored.

I could see that the mother started to get annoyed by the boys' chattering, so she told them to be quiet. The stillness of the boys was impeccable as if boredom took over their bodies. If you looked deeply into the eyes of the boys, you could see their brain playing, trying to self-soak into a moment and look at the richness of the park. Soon after, smirks slowly started to take shape on both of their faces. You could now tell that their thoughts were floating in the same direction, and soon enough, they turned to face each other, both waiting to say something, both knowing what the other was thinking. That's when sibling rivalry begins... and that's when boredom ends.

The boys sprinted to the end of the pathway of the park. I wondered what they were planning now. In the distance, I could vaguely see them performing a series of hand gestures, pointing at different things, and yelling eagerly at each other. Could they be choreographing a dance? Surely not in the middle of the park! A few minutes passed. One of the boys started drawing a horizontal line with his foot and I immediately knew what they were going to do. They were going to race! The pathway was nothing more than dirt littered with random rocks and dry leaves. I really hope they don't fall. Before they started the race, the boys respectfully shook

hands. One of the siblings started the countdown, three...two...one. They blasted off the ground, fiercely running towards me. I could almost see the adrenaline rushing through their bloodstream, making their heart beat faster and diverting blood to their muscles. Just as they were coming to a dramatic halt, one of the boys tumbled on the rocks, leaving several scratch marks on his knees.

Without hesitation, the sibling who was hurt insulted his brother. He seemingly thought his brother tripped him. I could feel the tension and hear the intensity in his tone. He berated every weak point of his brother and you could sense the emotion behind the words he was speaking. He refused his brother's validations. Soon, the other brother started attacking back. This small fight between the siblings seemed to be a choreographed dance of destruction, as if they had rehearsed it many times before. How did emotions switch so quickly? Where did the respect go? All I know is that violence and disrespect is not the accepted method of reconciliation, but rather, love and respect.

The female figure's eyes darted to the boys. She stopped their misunderstanding by asking them if they were hungry. With no delay, they simultaneously nodded their heads. Their anger left their bodies, as if nothing had happened.

As they left, I began to think more about the term 'respect'. I believe that respect is more than being nice, more than comforting words. It takes effort to look at the other person and take in who they are and show them you appreciate their point of view. It is listening, letting go of your own assumptions and treating them with care. It is in understanding conveyed by empathic words and actions to show the depth of feeling you hold for a person. In this way, respect should be foundational for every relationship, just in the same way that the roots are the foundation of these autumn trees. ■



Sonany Istaifo
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Look Beyond

Acrylic on Canvas Paper

Humanity is many colours.

HOPE

Harry Gibson · Year 5 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

The fire is raging, as I dash at the speed of light.
The heat starts getting even angrier and I feel my
back boiling up.
My legs are running so fast it feels like they are
detached.
I hear the roaring coming from the heart of the
flames.
A spark crosses over my face and sizzles on my skin.
Sweat starts to travel down my chest and ashes burn
my eyes.
I continue down the path towards the front gate
hoping to escape the monster that is devouring
everything it sees.
I ignore the words in my head echoing, “This is the
end!”

I push myself to find the courage to survive.
In the distance I see my grandfather calling for me.
Finally I get to the gate and relief fills us as we hug.
I drop to the ground dizzy from inhaling dark
smoke.
Just as I feel there’s nothing left in me, I hear the
sounds of the sirens filling the air.
I realise that we are going to be okay.
The fire was like a devil taking over but we didn’t
give up.
Life is sometimes tough but you have to keep
going. ■

LOST AT SEA

William Jones · Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

I dive down from the boat and brush past the school
of fish like droplets of rain in a storm.
They dash away at the sight of a shark with eyes of
a hawk, waiting to attack.
Biding its time in the coral.
I turn to my left,
And I catch a glance at a whale floating along like a
cloud in the sky.
A squid swims past.
and everything goes dark, darker than midnight,
I swim up in fright looking for the boat,
But it’s gone,
The currents pull me further, further into the sea.
I am a flea floating aimlessly through the marine.
With no hope of return. ■

RESPECT

Jack Mallick · Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

I lay on the dirt floor of my wooden shack in coldness. Crack! I hear the sound of the leather whip hitting cold bare skin in the distance. I shiver knowing the pain that they're feeling. After all, I feel that pain every single day. How could I forget. The damp dirt provides my only source of warmth. I imagine myself escaping every single night, I'm sure we all do. I'm tired of this. My heart is as heavy as a black stone under the blue sea as I drift off into a hibernation of horror and fear.

I wake up and slowly open my eyes, unable to move. This is what it's like every morning. This is the only time everything is silent and I can relax at all. This lasts for about five minutes if I'm lucky, before another guard wakes. After three minutes we are ordered to stand. I stand with my shoulders wide, hiding the fear that I am feeling. I look around and see all the other tribes. Their members all have the exact same look on their faces. The look says fear and submission but also desperation and frustration underneath. Imagine if we combined, I think to myself. We could use that desperation and frustration to come up with a plan to start a rebellion and overturn these leaders. It could work even if we don't like each other and don't understand each other's cultures. It would be amazing if we could make our way out of this. I know I'm not supposed to look at members of the enemy tribes because of the fact that we have been enemies for generations. I don't understand why it has to be this way. We don't even understand the other cultures, we have never tried. I think of asking our leader Niko if we could try talking to the other tribes but I'm sure he would never agree. Unless... his wife Esti agreed. Maybe she could get him to listen to me. At the end of our work day when we are getting marched back, I will ask her, because the guards will not suspect a thing.

I can't believe it, I think to myself with great happiness! Esti spoke to Niko about my thoughts and he agreed

to the rebellion. All we need is a great plan and some execution to somehow link up with the tribes. This is going to be the most challenging part since we can't even look at them. That night while laying down on the wet dirt I feel calm and less panic than previous nights. Niko and I had devised a surprisingly intricate master plan. With much confidence after our talk, I had the best sleep I can remember. Strangely I felt a sense of comfort.

I woke up earlier this morning, excitement running through my veins. Niko and I were going to talk to the other tribe leaders today. As usual we stand for our morning drill. I sneak looks around at others who have the same fearful looks on their faces as they do every day. I wonder if my face looks different today somehow. During the day as Niko and I approach the tribe leaders they seem to be so shocked by our talking to them with kindness in our eyes; before they know it they are listening to us. We quietly explain our plan to each of them and tell all of them how we are going to unite and stand together tomorrow. While speaking to the final leader I see terror in his eyes and feel a solid dark figure over my shoulder. I start to breathe heavily and know what's coming. I turn to look and just as I do, I see his heavy baton-like weapon coming down at me. I feel the pain and see stars as I fall to the ground. I'm waiting for another blow, but it doesn't come. Instead I hear what sounds like a stampede, our tribe and all the other tribes have broken away and are storming towards me to show their support and stand up to our long time bullies. They link arms and walk as one. For once the guards do not know what to do and stand there in shock. As the tribes continue to walk towards them, one by one drop their weapons and surrender. We do not hurt them but allow everyone to join as a community. I can't believe it. Finally after generations of pain our people unite as one. We are free. Now when we look into each other's eyes instead of fear all we see is respect. ■

FLAME BY FLAME

James Zervas · Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

The fires are blazing, burning everything down,
Stripping nature of its colourful beauty.
The overbearing heat, kidnapping the rain of its
drops.
If you saw those heroes in action, trust me, they
never stop.
They would not take the applause.
All they prayed for was some help, help they needed,
Unluckily, the heroes lost a few of their members,
were the trusty firefighters.
Thoughts, emotions, feelings, actions,
Is this really what they should be doing?
At home is a family, a daughter, a son, and yet they
did not give up.
The fire was blazing right in front of their faces.
It was extremely vicious, like sharp blades being
thrown at you.
They fought through it step by step and did not
realise the flames

Slowly creeping up on them.
The flames were raging and spreading extremely
fast.
It was like they were being circled.
It was like nature wanted them out of its forest.
It was like they were being blamed for the fires.
It was like they were being blamed for the loss of the
native animals, now facing extinction. It was like
the world was falling apart flame by flame, ember
by ember.
Alas, the fires were not the end of this demise.
Now an invisible fire is raging through the world.
More destructive than the flames of January.
The engulfing fire of the recent worldwide
pandemic.
It is spreading just like the fires were.
An engulfing punishment in disguise. ■

THE WARMTH OF RESPECT

Isabel Hills · Year 7 · Star of the Sea College

Respect to me is when I'm home, it keeps me
warm, and far from harm,
It gives me hope when light is gone, it guides
me through the silent calm.
It never wanders, it never stops, to think about
what could go wrong,
To place your trust, in the dark, to never fear, I
call that love. ■

SIZE DOESN'T MATTER

Jeremy Dalton · Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

The sun was blocked out by a thick mix of smoke clouds and rain, rain that was coming hard and fast like a steam train. As we continued to drive, I looked at the path ahead. That path consisted of puddles, barbed wire and bodies; the bodies of many innocent human beings. When I saw this I felt the fear and sadness wash over me. I had only been in Vietnam for two weeks, yet my eyes have witnessed so much I wish I could forget.

I turned towards the soldier in uniform sitting next to me, his expression was blank, but I knew he was trying to block out the horror of what was around us – just as I was. The soldier's name was Nathan, and he was the closest thing I had to family on this side of the world. We grew up in the same part of country Victoria and became close during the tough experience of army training.

As we continued to drive deeper into the smoke and the smell of rotting bodies, I looked at the soldiers' faces around me. Some were filled with fear while others looked exhausted. As I looked at these young men I began to think about their families. Families they might not ever see again. Finally we arrived and made camp in the muddy, humid rainforest near Poom Chong village, Vietnam. Everywhere I look I am constantly reminded of war. There were severely injured men all around us and in just a few battles our troop had lost hundreds of men.

Eventually, it was time to turn in for the night, but despite my exhaustion, sleep was hard to come by in the jungle, where humidity is mixed with the anxiety of what the next 24 hours would bring. This made for another rough night of tossing and turning in my hammock.

As night became dawn my whole body became even more tense. In just a few short hours I could be holding my gun in the heat of battle with an enemy, or find myself knee deep in swampy terrain, not able to see the enemy at all. I tried not to think too much, to focus on just what I needed to do. I tried to keep my doubts deep inside; my doubts about this whole war. Deep down I didn't want to kill anyone, I didn't want to cut someone's life short just because they believed in something different.

As we made our way through the thick mud I turned to see Nathan struggling beside me, he had a slight limp from an earlier injury but was pushing on regardless. He looked worried. We had been stumbling our way through the mud and humidity

for hours yet all we could find was a discarded tunnel hidden in the undergrowth. We used our weapons to push our way through the opening.

Out of the blue I heard a small voice that startled me... "Kẻ xâm nhập! Kẻ xâm nhập!"

"Wh...What was that?" I panicked.

As I spun around I shone my torch, expecting to see an angry Vietnamese running out of the darkness. But instead I found myself staring at a little Vietnamese boy. He looked like he hadn't seen food in weeks. His face was as white as a ghost and he looked so fragile. He needed our help. I reached in my bag for a piece of food.

"You're not going to help him, are you?" said the soldier behind me. "We're fighting a bloody war against these people."

This filled me with rage. "Our war is not with these kids" I said under my breath. Still Nathan and my fellow soldiers continued to move deeper into the tunnel. It was very dark in the tunnel and it was hard to see the little boy next to me let alone what was ahead. All of a sudden, a deafening explosion erupts. Our soldiers in front were being pushed back metres. Instinctively I threw myself in front of the boy. I felt numb for a moment followed by excruciating pain across my chest. I'm sure my ribs were broken and my breath felt ragged.

I desperately scanned the tunnel looking for Nathan, seeing injured soldiers everywhere but I can't see my friend. Suddenly the little boy grabs my attention and points at a man dripping blood from everywhere. That man was Nathan, I rushed over and frantically searched for a sign of life. He was still breathing but he was unconscious, and he looked like he was moments away from dying.

I felt distraught and desperately looked around for a way out of the tunnel. Then I felt a tug on my right sleeve, I looked over and there was the boy, he was standing near a pile of sandbags, he started to pull at the sandbags to reveal another exit. Then he led me and all of us soldiers through the tunnel. I held Nathan on my shoulders, praying that he would stay alive. We staggered through the tunnel until finally we reached the exit and on the other side was the village of Poom Chong. The boy continued to guide our troop to the hospital where we could treat Nathan and ourselves. I had saved that boy's life, and in return he saved my best friend. ■

UNTITLED

Theodore Schlicht · Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

I stand on top of Cable Mountain, legs feeling weak from the strenuous hike to the peak. I look over the edge to see the whole of Cape Town, South Africa. What were once detailed houses are now a jungle of tiny squares. When I take my heavy backpack off my shoulders, I feel like nothing is holding me down, the high altitude and picturesque view adds to the feeling. I sit down to absorb the atmosphere; my eyes focus on the sapphire ocean. The light breeze carries the salty aroma across the mountain and even though its one kilometre away I feel like I'm right there, with my feet in the coarse sand. The subtle lines of white foam go in and out, my breathing mimics the motion. It's hard to imagine why some people fear it because as I sit there, I feel relaxed, despite being about to rappel down a mountain.

My moment of peace is interrupted as I realise what I came to do. I stand up and unzip my backpack full of ropes of all colours. The thought that these lines of fibres are the difference between life and death creeps into my head and makes me doubt what I'm doing. I pull out my harness and begin to attach it to my body, taking a long time, I'm stalling. I check each part four times over, I want to be certain. I stand up and walk over to the edge, I look over the side...I stop. A sudden chill runs through the veins of my body. I become stiff, like I'm screaming inside but no matter how

loud nothing happens. I eventually get a hold of myself and start to run away from the edge as if the petrifying drop to my death is chasing me. I run until there is no more space to go, I fall on the ground, digesting what has just happened. I know it's not real, but the trauma of the past keeps racing through my head, and I feel like I'm there.

This isn't the first time I've been here. It was two years ago. It was stormy. It was the worst day of my life. I was with my friend, and we were taking on the challenge of abseiling down Cable Mountain. The clouds looked menacing, and the wind was violent. We knew it was too dangerous, but we hadn't travelled all the way to just walk back home. The weather was too fierce, I lost someone close to me that day.

So, as I stand in the same position, this time alone, I doubt if I'm good enough for the challenge. My failure of the past might be a sign, a sign that I should've never continued with this. I should never have come here; it was a waste of time. I will never abseil again. I'm hopeless. My hands move towards my harness, to take it off and for me to travel back home. But a strange and unexpected feeling of motivation arises in me. There's a voice in my head telling me to stand up, to face the challenge, to respect myself. I pick myself up, walk over to the side and secure the rope to a sturdy tree. I step over the edge. ■

THE PLUM PUDDING

Maggie Anderson · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

POOF!

Plum pudding, first of the day.

Dancing flames lick impatiently at its skin, in a
flickering frenetic dance.

A mighty fruit scent rises to the ceiling, Grandpa
proudly

slices one generous portion, large enough to
satisfy an empty bellied army.

Cousins scramble eager to receive the first piece,

Aunts and Uncles urge them to hurry up, greedy
to recapture a piece of childhood too.

A tranquil bliss settles upon the room.

POOF!

Plum pudding, last of the day,

redolent of candied peel, warm figs and sweet
pears, its fragrance

aromatically wafts into the room.

Family assemble, anticipation piqued at the
dinner table.

Second celebration, another advent of togetherness.

Prior fullness long forgotten, the next pudding
swiftly devoured

bright sharpness of cranberries and muscatel
raisins crush against the sides of mouths.

Discreetly, put down spoon

while

releasing the top button of Christmas jeans. ■

EMPTINESS

Mia Gasparini · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

The world has stopped spinning

The grass is no longer viridescent

The flowers never bloomed

We peer out our frosted window and see a
hollow emptiness

Shields in place, few leave their footprints on
the forsaken streets

We tear our gaze away from the outside world
and focus on what is within

A faint glow warms our bitter emotions

As we embrace those we can

Our hearts full, we appreciate the slightest touch

We smile and laugh

That is enough ■

PUREST CONNECTION

Taylah Magee · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

Isolated by grey depths,
Bound by edges of a never ending circle.
Cocooned from the rest of humanity,
But never a moment of failure.

Her love is free from constraint,
Radiating to us with grace.
Our skin is illuminated from her light,
Our hearts growing wider.

A divine being.
Wings outstretched beyond the wall of her cave,

Golden halo brighter than the sun,
Eyes glistening with glowing spirit.

Admirable talents,
Unparalleled devotion.
We are protected, my mother and I.
Hearts bonded with love shared.

We may be separated by seas,
Challenged by war,
Heartbroken beyond repair.
Distance cannot sever our everlasting bond. ■

PERCEPTION

Jemma Brodie · Year 8 · Star of the Sea College

My poetic 'object' during lockdown was my mirror.

Entrance.
Teller of truth among lies,
Staring at you, confidence diminishes as it dies.
Your joy and sadness, two-faced
Which leaves people like me displaced.

I wish I could destroy,
Like once done with Troy.
I would leave you shattered!
Fragmented glass scattered!
Pieces fill hands, slice cuts, cause bleeding,

Not stopping my persistent proceeding.
Demonic and narcissistic is what You are,
But is my perception of you correct from afar?

No, 'tis not.
I can't hate you a lot.
You whose gaze meets mine, isn't the
deceptive one,
You reflect what you see in me, a revelation
that isn't fun.
I can't slaughter the bad in you,
That would be slaughtering what makes the
good in me true. ■



Alyssa Cernusak
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College



Andrea Yanniss
Year 12 · Kolbe Catholic College

Still

Ink and Digital



Eve Pearson
Year 6 · Christ Our Holy Redeemer, Oakleigh East

Untitled Portrait



Maeve McIntosh
Year 4 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington



Meredith Susanto
Year 4 · Holy Rosary Primary School, Kensington

THE ROCK AND THE CARERS

Bonny Cortese · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

The red dirt and the towering masterpiece. People came from near and far to be in its remarkable presence, appreciating the raw beauty and power it held. Yet, although people admired it, there was no respect. They came and gaped at the structure, climbed it, and then they would go. Never considering it again, except to look back on an album full of their photos holding it up. No-one weighed the effects it had on the traditional community and the effects on the rock itself. This rock was a place of spiritual significance, connecting the community and carers with their past, present and future. Generations of carers tended to and protected the rock.

Tourists came and went, came and went. They came and climbed – “conquered the rock” some would say. They would also chip off pieces to bring home as souvenirs of their experience. But did they ever contemplate the weight the rock was under, the hurt it felt from their actions? The carers did not mind the people admiring the rock, but they never understood the need to climb it – it was highly disrespectful. The carers respected the people who came, even if they climbed – but could not understand why the people would not respect their wishes. They noticed those who chose not to in recognition of the carers wishes. The carers saw the land as “tjukurpa,” meaning they saw it as the connection to the ancestral beings.

Then, the rocks' carers noticed the stress the rock was under. They worked for decades negotiating that the climb should be closed, for the safety of the rock and the climbers. Their pleas were being tossed aside for the money it was generating. After much debate and consistent effort from the carers, it was announced that climbing would no longer be allowed. The rock brightened in hope; the day could not come soon enough. People scampered to climb it one final time before it was closed, supposedly for the glory and the chance to brag. People protested to keep it open, for their own selfish use, not for the benefit of the environment. But the rock stayed strong, and soon enough the day came. It breathed a sigh of relief, and the weight was lifted from its shoulders. Pieces of the rock began to return as people recognised the sacredness of the rock. The climbing path was closed for good and the carers rejoiced. This rock was called Uluru and the carers were the Anangu people. They were filled with joy as they Uluru was their sacred place, and it had finally been acknowledged. ■



Grace Arora
Year 7 · St. Peter's College



Michelle Hoang
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Vinuthmie Nakandala
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Zaria Kilmartin
Year 11 · St. Peter's College



Kirsten Canda
Year 8 · St. Peter's College

—

This drawing that I created represents respect because we should all respect each other's unique characteristics. Everyone in this world is very different from each other, and I want people to understand that everyone should be able to express themselves without feeling judged or misunderstood. I also wanted to show that everyone is not what they seem on the outside, so I want everyone to respect each other because you never know what someone may be going through.



Selina Romeril
Year 11 · St. Peter's College

LONELY OBSERVATIONS

Charlotte Dring · Year 12 · Aquinas College

Creative response to Rear Window

I am usually a pretty private person. I like to believe it helps me hide behind a screen of innocence because no one really knows anything about me. You could say that that makes me seem mysterious and untrustworthy but I just find it hard to open up to people.

However, in recent days I found myself questioning the whole idea of privacy and innocence ever since Kathy at work mentioned the film *Rear Window* by Alfred Hitchcock. I too often find myself peering out the window of my apartment at my neighbours, my mind wondering about what kind of lives they lead. Not unlike L.B. Jefferies, I am a lonely single woman in my late twenties, with not much else to keep myself occupied other than my own thoughts and Netflix.

So as I sit here in my dull, grey fabric armchair, the warmth of the sun streaming in through the glass panes, I find my eyes once again wondering from window to window of the apartments facing mine. I stop short of observing the snapshots of varying individuals in their own private lives as I wonder if me watching them so attentively would be violating their confidentiality and make me guilty of being a Peeping Tom. I can almost hear Jeff's nurse, Stella, listing off the charges for poking in on other people's business, but my own inquisitiveness is undeniable, and I find myself drifting off into a state of wonder as I daydream about the lives of my neighbours.

I first catch my eye on an older couple in a second floor window. They are sitting side by side on a green upholstered couch, the woman with knitting needles in her hands and the man leaning back against the soft cushions. Cheers from a game show emerge from the speakers of the TV and out of their open window to be identified by my own senses. It is at a volume much louder than someone of my age would require, but the hearing aids nestled snugly on the ears of the happy couple provided adequate reasoning. It was such an innocent setting. The woman continues knitting row by row of a baby blue blanket, something I like to imagine would be a gift to a young grandson spoiled with love from euphoric family and friends.

This image of peace and serenity seems appealing to me; a companion for life, contentment and pride from the successes of life. It feels invasive to watch the man and woman lock eyes with each other and share a small kiss that lights up both of their faces in an irreplaceable way, but I am drawn to it in a way I can't quite describe. I let out a sigh, suddenly

overwhelmed with guilt, but also full of realisation that I will probably never have a life as perceivably perfect as theirs.

My ears perk up from the sound of distant yelling, causing my eyes to wander to a wide window on the 5th floor. The silhouette of a reasonably young man stands behind sheer black curtains, hair styled to spike up, face showing an expression of rage. His height allows him to tower over a petite blonde woman, her small figure complimented by a flowy yellow sundress resting just above her knees. Her face is fighting to keep a calm expression, but it is evident that it is on the verge of revealing tears. The whole scene makes me feel uneasy, and I can't help but realise that the curtains add a sense of privacy that is probably giving the man courage and opportunity to take advantage of his power over the woman.

Expletives emerge from his vocal chords, and the intensity and harsh pronunciation make the woman visibly jump, threatening to break her already unstable stance. She wobbles on her feet as his forearm rises to align with her face, causing her to tense up from the possibility of impact. I turn my head away, unable to witness the moment. An unsettling cracking sound of hand against cheek bone sends shivers down my spine. Maybe watching this scene play out is an invasion of just a small snippet of the couple's life together, especially because I don't have the full story, but something about it draws me in. I gain the courage to return my line of sight to their apartment, just in time to see the woman crumple to the floor with her face in her hands, the man walking towards the door with his back to her inconsolable body shaking from tears.

Unsettled from what just took place, I drift my eyes up to the penthouse balcony where a middle aged man in a dark tailored suit is seated comfortably in an expensive looking outdoor furniture set-up. The French doors leading inside his apartment are wide open, exposing the long draped curtains to the mid-afternoon breeze and the total lack of privacy seemingly welcoming the gaze of a Peeping Tom. I scan his extravagant environment that clearly requires a bank account that is more cared for than my own, but notice it lacks any sign of other human inhabitants. The man's eyes flutter open and he squints from the bright sunlight. As he drifts back into consciousness his face falls to reveal a serious frown, brow furrowed from visible stress.

A few grey hairs fall across his forehead, a reminder of his aging body, but the clean shaven jawline adds a sense of youth. He stretches his limbs before

reaching for his phone to tend to any contacts demanding his attention. His face somehow turns more stern as he answers a phone call, giving short, precise responses to the person on the other end of the line. I look at my own phone in my hand, remembering the unanswered emails and missed calls I am still yet to address, and I realise that I am not that dissimilar to this stranger on the top floor. A large sigh escapes his lips as he hangs up the call, and I can almost see a dark cloud hovering over him, one that seems to have begun to cover my own life in recent weeks. I lean back in my armchair as he sinks back into his, and I am suddenly overwhelmed with the likelihood that I am looking into a vision of my own future.

As I sit here in the afternoon sun, staring off into the distance, I find myself contemplating my life and the actions that have led me to where I am now. I shut myself out from the world by valuing my privacy, and I realise now that it gives me a sense of innocence in terms of lacking real connection with other people. I watch my neighbours to fill my void

of naivety by observing others. I don't know if it is ethical for me to watch my neighbours as I do, but I am strangely comforted by the fictional lives of L.B. Jefferies and his few companions. I may not be solving any murders but I am observing the private lives in the same way Jeff was, hiding behind my own windows that are free for people to watch my own life go by.

It is here where I stop, wondering about what people would observe of my life through my rear window. I am but a lonesome woman with limited visitors and human interaction. Maybe there is such a thing as being too private, and that it can be as harmful as lacking innocence. The lives I found myself witnessing today could be my own if I made the wrong choices, and I know now that it is up to me to choose my own path. I smile and shake my head slightly at myself, fingers gripping the small device in my hand as I recite Kathy's number in my head before hearing the dialling tones connecting me to life. ■



Cassie Wynne
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Kyla Millar
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Isabella D'Alessandro
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Kyla Millar
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Imogen Pawlik
Year 10 · Aquinas College



Johanna O’Keeffe
Year 12 · Aquinas College

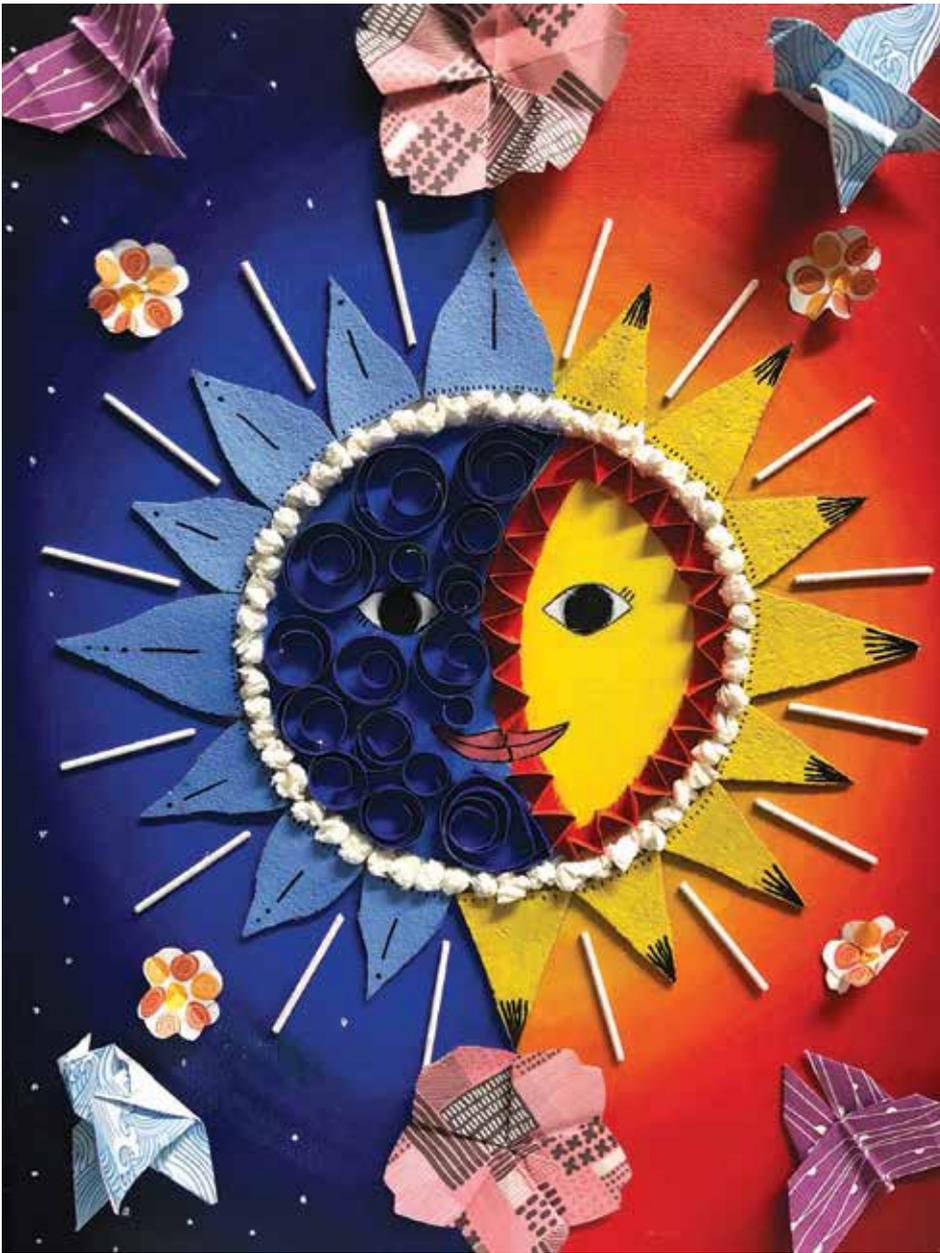
Four People, Four Stories: Georgia, Kevin, Mary, Andrew

My theme was culture and I represented this through four people in my life whose stories impacted me and the way I view life.



Ellie Martin
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Mixed Media



Anne Lazaro
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Mixed media



Ava Krajina
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Greylead pencil



Caitlin Mai
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Greylead pencil



Danielle Berger
Year 11 · CRC Melton

Food truck design



Ellen Kerr
Year 10 · CRC Melton

Greylead pencil



Arabella Green
Year 10 · Marymede Catholic College

Self-Respect

When I was making this piece, I thought about how society's normality of perfection is based on opinions and unrealistic expectations, and how easy it is in this day and age to change the way you were born – if that's changing gender or getting a nose job. We are told that there is a standard for beauty and if you don't like what you have then cut it off, fix it or turn it into something that society will accept. The mirror never changes but the reflection does.



Jessica Turner
Year 12 · Marymede Catholic College

Mirror



Lauren Chan
Year 12 · Marymede Catholic College

Anxiety



Courtney Spencer
Year 12 · Marymede Catholic College

Living Through COVID-19

THE DIFFERENCE

Angus Picking · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Virus
Difficult, alone
Tiring, upsetting, missing
Lonely, sad, bored, mad
COVID-19

Remote Learning
Normal, safe
Exercising, comforting, sleeping
Secure, loved, cared
Routine ■

LIFE IS OK

Charlie Pfahl · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Life is OK.
Staying at home is OK.
Trampolining is OK.
Schooling is OK.
Bike riding is OK.
Watching is OK.
But it was better before. ■

COLOURS

Ethan Chapman · Year 2
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

If I was blue, I'd be as peaceful as the sea
And I'd swim with the whirling whales.

If I was brown, I'd be as beautiful as bark
And I'd snore with bouncing bears.

If I was grey, I'd be as big as rocks
And I'd run with enormous elephants. ■

THE RAINBOW

Saskia Swain · Year 2
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

If I was white, I'd be as bright as the moonlight
And I'd shoot through the sky like a falling star.

If I was yellow, I'd be as joyful as a happy child
And I'd play in the mud with daring dingo pups.

If I was red, I'd be as hot as the flickering fire
And I'd be as playful as fearless foxes. ■

I COCK-A-DOODLE-DOO WITH THE SUN

Nazara Zara · Year 3 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

I cock-a-doodle-doo with the sun to awaken
the world.
I pick the ground seed with the windy breeze
brushing by.
I run to my pen with the clouds floating
overhead.
I lay my eggs with the rain tapping on my
window.
I sit on my eggs with dusk sinking in.
I nuzzle in my soft hay with moon,
To dream that I might fly tomorrow. ■

A BRAND NEW CITY

Federica Imbriano · Year 3
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

A fire
A whole city ruined
Someone says they want to build a new one
A better one, a cleaner one and a safer one
That person names it Melbourne 2.0
It smells of freshly picked flowers
And cakes from bakeries taken out of the oven
I can hear the big machines
Getting ready to pack up and leave
The builders' saws stop
I can't wait to hear the people's chatter
It feels like a brand new world
It looks like the city is ready to welcome again ■

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?

Rose McNeill · Year 2
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

“What are you looking at?” I said to the rat.
“What are you looking at?” I said to the cat.
“What are you looking at?” I said to the bat.
“What are you looking at? Will you tell me that?”
“We are looking at you, for a matter of fact.”
“Looking at you and your funny hat!”
“What are you looking at?” ■



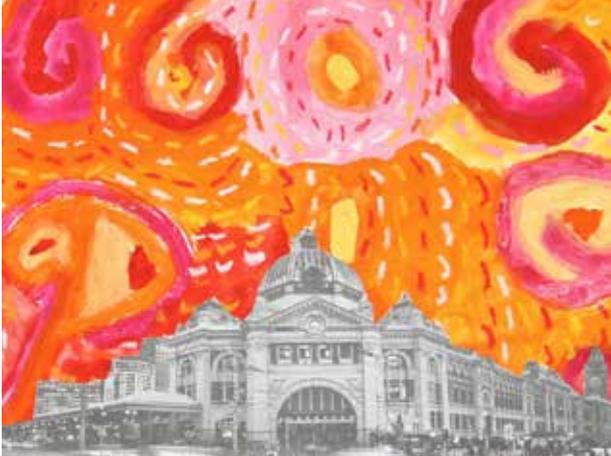
Ethan Chapman
Year 2 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Van Gogh at my Place



Georgia Anderson
Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Untitled



Lucia Ferrari
Year 1 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Van Gogh at my Place

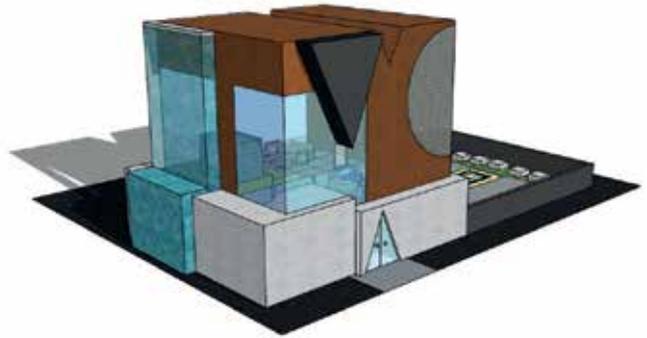


Ruby Utber
Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

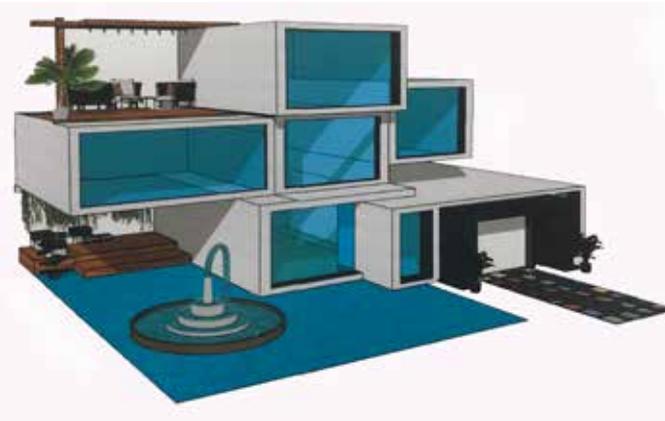
Untitled



Bella Moran
Year 11 · Aquinas College



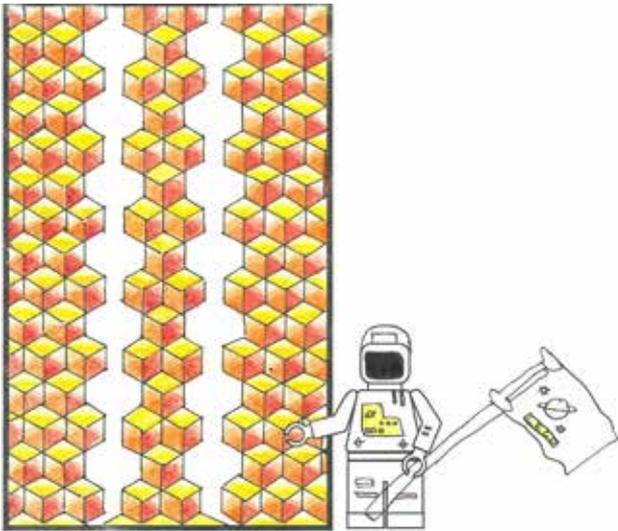
Emily Rieger
Year 11 · Aquinas College



Rachel McPherson
Year 11 · Aquinas College



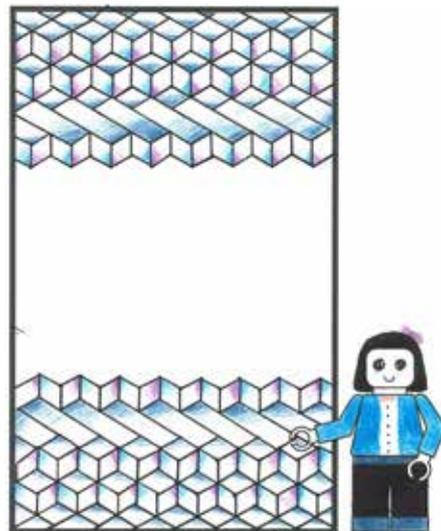
Zara Toet
Year 11 · Aquinas College



LEGOLAND

Madeleine Pearson
Year 8 · Aquinas College

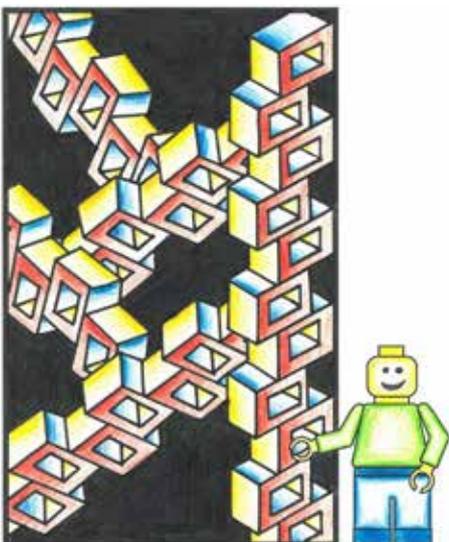
Lego Signage



LEGOLAND

Natasha Ladd
Year 8 · Aquinas College

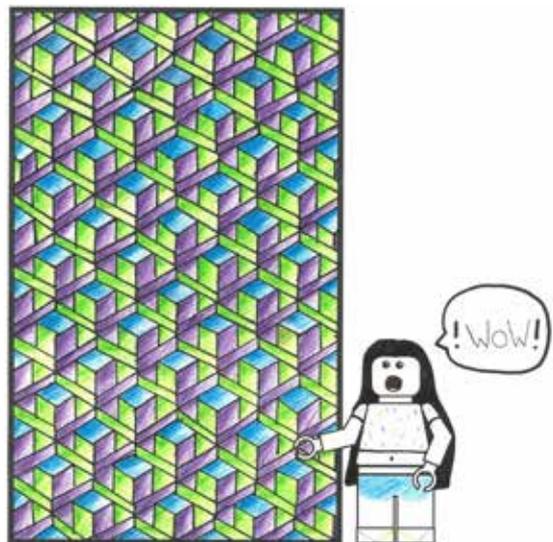
Lego Signage



LEGOLAND

Connor Haughie
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Lego Signage



LEGOLAND

Dakota Pears
Year 8 · Aquinas College

Lego Signage

THE MAZE

Emma Coia · Year 10 · Aquinas College

I am running as fast as I can. Turning left and right through the coloured maze. They are chasing me and I can't let them catch me. I'm almost finished but I take a wrong turn and run head-on into the pink ghost. I can feel myself fading away... but now I'm back. I'm running through the maze again. And I'm still being chased. I have no control over where I go, so I run anywhere and everywhere. Taking sharp rights and tight lefts.

The many close calls have my adrenaline pumping and I feel invincible. I stop abruptly. I can no longer move and the ghosts are getting closer.

Suddenly, the lights go dim. I look out through the large glass screen and see the last customer leave the arcade.

Game over. ■



Olivia Della Gatta
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Imogen Burg
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Imogen Burg
Year 9 · Aquinas College

CURIOUS CREATURES, WILD MINDS

Filifili-Christmas Puipui-Tonise · Year 9 · Kolbe Catholic College

“Aphrodite, come! There’s something I’ve got to show ya!” Reza called.

Aphrodite slowly climbed down the ladder from the cottage rooftop to the secret chambers of the gardens. Such a location abounded in greenery and beauty, she descended to view a restricted area. Her mind was filled with prudence, as a large, deep hole formed beside Reza’s feet.

“Now, now Aphrodite,” Reza said wearily. “You are doing nothing wrong here.”

She thought how pathetic she was to her own community, enough to have her own room so people could visit every day to despise the emotionless person she was.

She walked back into her cottage with ease, finding the blonde-haired girl, sitting on her bed with a welcoming smile. She had amber-coloured eyes and a river of silky blonde hair. Aphrodite didn’t know or even want to know her name, though she smiled with sincerity. Her beauty was Aphrodite’s desire.

Aphrodite saw her often, especially when she left the room with Reza, which wasn’t permitted by the care-mother – the head of the cottage and the creator of Aphrodite’s imprisonment. She lay on her unstable bed and stared at the blank walls that surrounded her. There was an odd silence apart from the fuzz that resided near the dull air vents. Her eyelids grew heavy, staring out the window into what seemed like freedom. Green trees and bushes swarmed with lilies and orchids as well as fruits. There was a small pond too with a nearby fountain where people would toss coins for luck.

By afternoon, Reza visited Aphrodite with a crow firmly grasped onto his left arm. It was coated black and its orange iris eyed Aphrodite mischievously.

“Aphrodite, what is this?” Reza asked with interest. He carefully settled himself next to Aphrodite.

“A crow. I see them everywhere, especially when it’s dark,” Aphrodite quietly replied. She offered to hold the creature whilst Reza analysed its wings, posture and beak.

“What a beautiful creature,” Reza smiled.

Aphrodite’s heart lightened with pride as she grimly explained to Reza about the treacherous animal. “Let’s name it Ares because it does bring misfortune.”

After the morning sun had risen, Aphrodite awoke from her sleep, astonished to be back in her bed. “Reza?” With no response, Aphrodite headed to breakfast with the others. She always hated the

others. She despised their normal rooms with floral bedsheets and shelves with fictional storybooks and fabric stuffed toys of all imaginable colours and textures. Aphrodite remembered peeking in one room which was enclosed by soft lavender walls and an open window covered with translucent curtains. Bunk beds, computers, toys, crafts; everything a child would ever desire appeared in that one room, and Aphrodite knew how unbearably incomparable it was to hers.

The cafeteria contained the faces of contentment, though nobody wanted to sit beside her, or even acknowledge her existence. Many crowded around one particular table while Aphrodite sat alone. But today, the blonde-haired girl sat beside her.

“I’m Desiree,” the blonde-haired girl smiled.

Desiree, Aphrodite thought. *Her name is Desiree.*

Aphrodite knew she was genuine, but looked away with disregard. She then caught a glimpse of Reza smiling at her from the kitchen. After signaling for Reza to move closer, they giggled with amusement and discussed Ares and his experience with Reza. Desiree understood and stared at Aphrodite in awe.

After a few days alone, Reza had brought along a creature with golden fur and a glorious mane to surprise Aphrodite. It had fierce, pale eyes and canine teeth. Reza was intrigued by the animal and its majesty. Reza guided Aphrodite up a ladder to the rooftop once again to observe the sunset and its reflection upon the new mysterious creature.

“Lion,” Aphrodite smiled. The golden sun rays enlightened her sorrowful eyes to reflect innocence and wonder deep within her soiled appearance. Her plaid dress and t-bar shoes were already stained and damaged, but she smiled with the boy of her imagination as they watched the golden sunset together. Suddenly she felt an agonising kick that numbed her body. Surges of pain continued throughout her arms as she lay on the rooftops, weak and vulnerable, her strength draining from her body. Reza had disappeared and Ares had flown to protect her. Before blacking out, she could’ve sworn she saw a flash of blonde hair.

The next morning, Aphrodite woke with bruises and stitches to her arms and legs. They were painless but they alarmed her. Suddenly Desiree appeared at her side.

“Aphrodite, thank God you are fine,” Desiree said relieved. “I saw you on the roof. How on earth did you get up there?” Aphrodite silenced herself with the awareness that Desiree had saved her life.

“I’m glad you’re okay,” Desiree smiled.

Once Desiree had left the room, Aphrodite checked her bruises. The frail girl looked around her room to find stuffed animals and toys. Aphrodite convinced herself it wasn’t a sign.

Over time, new creatures, as well as objects, were created. Bunny-crocodiles and dragons, horse-cats, unicorns, the infamous Pegasus and her favourite, the ‘Gretacorn’- a creature with a lion’s body and the head of a domestic cat. It was soft and for Aphrodite, it represented a sense of security and loyalty. She named each and every one of them after wild plants or people in her community.

One day, Aphrodite’s room was like the others; colourful and vibrant, containing objects for her entertainment. Desiree sat back to watch the astonishment and progressive joy on Aphrodite’s face as a fluffy, white bunny snuggled in her arms against her sweater and rested its eyes.

“Aphrodite! Aphrodite, come over here,” Reza called. “There’s something I’ve got to show ya!”

Reza’s eyes diverted her attention to a deep hole in the centre of the cottage’s garden. It had a radius no larger than a tree and was very dark.

“What’s this?” Aphrodite asked curiously.

“A hole... *obviously*. There was a mysterious legend that originated from the heart of this very town. Two kids, they said. With wild minds and a

broad imagination ... like now frankly... not that I don’t exist,” he quickly mumbled.

Aphrodite gazed at him with doubt. *Two kids?* she thought.

Before she could react, Reza quickly took her hand and jumped into the burrow. There was instant darkness cast over the couple as they fell into a pond of darker mystery.

“Reza!” Aphrodite shouted.

Reza knew that Aphrodite would never know the reasons behind his actions, despite the times he had tried to tell her. He had remained calm, like all his other experiments in a deluded mind, only to be misunderstood. But Reza had faith in her. “Do you have an imagination or not Aphrodite?” he urged her. Suddenly, the hole was shallow and they had fallen from a dark tunnel into a place above the clouds. Aphrodite’s petrified face was illuminated with the sunlight, as she prepared to parachute. Reza glowed with pride as his parachute opened and gracefully led them towards the ground. They landed in a field of daisies and mountains and all her creatures abounded in the wilderness. A tall waterfall appeared, gushing down streams of clear water from the treasures of its roots.

Aphrodite never returned to the bedroom, now that she could control the complexity of her mind and nothing stopped her ever again. ■

BLACK & WHITE

Reeta Shoomun · Year 8 · Kolbe Catholic College

Passengers. They sat, some stood. One with an audacious simper sat awkwardly, out of place, in an open airport. His eyes lingered, searching for a certain something. In the bustling atmosphere, he caught sight of a piano, he left his property and dawdled towards it. He made himself comfortable, his fingers tracing along the white and black keys of the piano. Quite the contrary, the keys represented his feelings, black and white.

The young man reached over, fingers swiftly gliding on the keys. Just then, a mellow and harsh, but soft tone was played. From the corner of his eyes, the man could see his seat, along with his suitcase beside it. The man's fingers were so soft – like butter – they glided across the keys, smoothly and effortlessly. In some cases, the man imagined the keys to be fragile and so that helped, in reality. Faces turned, quiet noises were made but no one wanted to disturb the pianist. But the young man was already someplace else, rather distracted by the voices in his head. They demanded a piece of him, but he refused to let them take him. He continued to play. His frail, boney fingers continued to press on several keys, producing tension and release, dissonance and consonance. The aroma surrounding the milieu gave him a sense of style.

All the while, more faces stared back – some, with patched eyes and sunken cheeks and others with a flicker of spark in their eyes. A girl came around, she began to dance, her feet taking dainty skips and jumps. Her mother followed, fetching her phone from inside her carry-bag. She came in contact with it and quickly clicked the camera icon and started to record both her daughter dancing and the man whom the music belonged to. The mother felt it necessary to keep these memories intact, she will tend to them once more to relive this moment – though she will treasure this moment in her heart, she fears her heart may weaken with time passing, her cognition feeding on the reminiscence.

The man behind the music could hear slight, pounding steps and felt the sudden wafts of air coming his way. He daren't turn around, he was afraid of stopping. "Keep going," he murmured to

himself unconsciously in a slurred, monotonous tone. The voices in his mind were pulling at the strings, as though in a tug of war, but this was no game. A huff and puff could be heard, the dancing girl had stopped, now abruptly giggling in sheer delight. This played as a distraction for the young man, conceivably a rest from brainwork.

These voices that only he heard were taking a toll on him and constraining his train of thought. "Curiosity killed the cat," a way-too-familiar voice spoke, leaving an echo. The words were luminous, almost shallow, but they packed a punch. The diminishing echo seemed to get louder – either the young man was saying the words repeatedly or they were being said to him. As far as he knew, he couldn't differentiate one reasonable alternative from the other. The words dimmed down, leaving "killed cat". All at once, the man felt a sharp, loud deafening sound propagating, he trembled, a chilling sensation tingled through his skin, his hands collapsed, tense muscles hinged themselves to uncoil. His fingers were exposed to the friction, he stopped. In a quick manner, he intentionally retrieved his previous pace, tempo and style – he made it seem as if the pause was part of the performance – and so he continued, now with calloused fingers.

A shadow passed across the man's face. He looked forth to his fingers, making sure that they didn't stumble and fall. The golden rings he caught sight of, made him realise the clear reality he was living in contrast to the vast, imaginative world he could build and be a part of. His eyes bubbled with tears – he became blurry eyed. A subtle tear moved across his face like a raindrop pelting on a window, only this one was slower in motion, bittersweet in taste when it reached the curve of his mouth. A feline smile curved at the corners of his mouth, his eyes crinkled. The young man felt himself shifting, changing – cultivating an air of indifference. A tear of lament was all it took for the voices to stop. It's a matter of time and place in correspondence to when things might crumble, leaving debris as reminiscence. For time can be a greedy thing – it sometimes steals details and memories for itself. ■

RESPECT

Jade Landing · Year 8 · Padua College

My name is Caity Brown. I am 16 years old and I lost my best friend. Her name was Olivia Smith, I met her when I was 4 when we both started school together. We clicked straight away. I spent the best years of my life with her and I miss her more than anything, so, to my ex best friend...

Thank you, thank you for everything. Thank you for everything you have taught me and helped me through. Thank you for the countless hours we've spent laughing and smiling. Thank you for you and your family for accepting me as if I was related to you. Thank you for the long hours we have spent taking and gossiping in the middle of the night when everyone else was asleep.

To my beautiful ex best friend, I miss you more than anything and more than you could ever imagine. Your family misses you too. It has been a whole year without you yet it seems like a lifetime. Some mornings I can't get out of bed knowing that you are gone and I'm never going to be able to see you again.

I love you, but why? Why did you leave me, your family and our friends? Why didn't you say goodbye? Why didn't you get help? I knew you were struggling but I didn't realize it was that bad. You could have spoken to me, I could have helped you. Was it me? Were you giving me signs? Should I have known? These are the questions I constantly ask myself.

I feel guilty everyday and not a second goes past where I don't think of you.

I was in shock for weeks when I found out you were gone and I was devastated for months.

Your mum and dad are still distraught.

I still visit them every day after school because it reminds me of you. Your little brother, Guss, he

turned three a few weeks ago, he is still too young to understand what has happened. He asked me the other day if I knew where you were because he misses you. I told him you had gone on a long holiday because I didn't know how to tell him what had really happened.

I miss our lunches. I miss our chats. I miss your smile. I miss your laugh. I miss your hugs and I miss knowing that you will be there for me no matter what.

I miss you Olivia.

When you told me that you would always be there for me, I didn't realise that always and forever meant this. I never thought that it would end like this. I am still in shock, I'm upset but I am also hurt. I know that you did this for yourself but I wish you had thought of all that life had to offer to you and all it had to offer to us. I thought we would grow old together. Raise our kids together. Go traveling. Go to parties together. Get married. Now I will have to do this without my best friend. I will do it for the both of us. I just wish you had thought about this before you did what you did.

You have changed my life forever.

To my beautiful ex best friend, thank you for the most amazing years of my life. I appreciated you more than you would ever know and I wish I had told you that when I had the chance. I have never respected anyone more in my life, you were so strong, talented, smart and independent. I will never understand why you did it but I respect that it was your choice and you felt like you had no other options.

I know you are looking down on me.

Dear Olivia I miss you and I love you my angel, may you rest in peace my gorgeous girl. ■

BLACK LIVES MATTER

Nicky Beattie · Year 7 · Padua College

Black Lives Matter, we all chant as we head off down the street. Out footsteps echoing in unison. I clutch my Mom's hand and march along with everyone. Her hand is cold and nice against my hot brown skin that is being pierced by the burning sun. My throat has dried up from yelling and my nose is burning from the smell of smoke. Trees and buildings look down on me as I walk along. As we turn the corner we collide with another group and like a swarm of ants, we walk together, tightly. People are bumping next to each other like dodgem cars and my hand slips away from Mom's but I'm not worried. She is probably behind me. I go to turn around but the two groups separate and I'm being forced forward. "Mom". I call out. My head feels like a furnace and I'm beginning to get nervous. I tell myself to stay calm but the knot in my throat stops me. My stomach now feels like a washing machine, swirling and churning with fear. We open out near a park and there is a sea of people. Officers, protesters but no Mom.

I try to search around for Mom but I only see people's legs. There is a lot of yelling and suddenly gunshots are fired into the air and smoke begins filling the square. My ears are ringing from the noise and I can't think straight. Officers are pushing and shoving people and I just can't handle it. I just want Mom. I turn and run, holding back the waterfall of tears. I need to escape this crowd. I decide to go down a back alley and immediately the smell of alcohol poisons my nose, but it's quiet and that's all I want. The darkness helps my head think and cool down. I slide my back down the wall and put my head in between my knees. The ground is black as charcoal and I sob quietly, slowly, drifting myself asleep.

I wake up to eerie silence with soft footsteps. They approach slowly, like the rhythm of a ticking clock. I try to camouflage myself into the corner. Who is this? I wonder. As he approaches I see his uniform. Oh no... he's an officer. The officer comes right up to me, and just when I think he is going to drag me

off. He holds out a hand. I look up, his white smile and blue eyes looking straight at me. What's going on I wonder? I slowly extend my hand towards him and he helps me up.

"Where's your parent's buddy," he asks. I uncertainly give him a small shrug.

"Come on, let's have a look". We start walking out of the alley, I find myself looking up at him in awe.

As we come out of the alleyway you can hear the crowd chanting and yelling in the distance. We head away from the crowd though. I can see the park where we started up ahead. The green moist grass, that carries little droplets of rain, and the big palm trees that provide shelter. I start to hear a couple of chants again and as we get closer, I see her. Standing apart from the group looking around desperately. "Mom," I called out. She turns away from the protest group and looks in my direction. I release the officer's hand and run towards her. She grabs me and squeezes me tight. I can hear a sense of relief in the way she's breathing. I just squeeze her back.

As the group sees us out in front they stop and there, the officer stands all alone with hundreds of faces staring at him. Like a prey against a pack of wolves. Slowly he approaches and looks at us all. Slowly he bends down and takes a knee. The crowd cheers as he shows his respect. I smile and think back to when he helped me up from the alley. This police officer, I thought, was a good one. The officer continues to talk to the protesters but I am just glad to be back next to Mom. He turns around towards me and winks. "Thank You so much," my Mom says. The officer smiles before turning away and then walking around the corner. I wonder to myself why the officer bent down on a knee. I think back to the other officers who through the smoke and how they had acted. This officer knew he was doing the right thing, he knew he was being respectful. ■

HOMOPHOBIA

Sophie Rault · Year 7 · Padua College

There is 1 word that describes so many people out there, it's the worst word in the world:

Homophobic.

This isn't just an opinion or a debate, but this is real life. These sick people aren't respecting that love is love and everyone loves who they want to, and you can't shame anyone for being attracted to same-sex or opposite, there is no difference, there is no reason for anyone to be against it.

Being homophobic is equivalent to saying "Oh that's outrageous that you love who you want to love!" Does that sound right to you?

People aren't teaching kids at a young age that they can love who they want to and if a girl likes a girl or a boy likes a boy, it's completely fine and you are supported. But these homophobic people say it's "not appropriate for children to know yet." or "they're too young to decide"

Here are some examples of homophobia:

"I find gay couples gross, but I'm not homophobic or anything I have gay friends."

"I don't see why they need pride month. If we had a straight month it would be offensive."

"I just don't think it's appropriate for children to know about homosexuality."

"She's only saying she's gay because it's trendy."

It's just sickening.

I believe that the LGBTQIA+ Community should be treated like everyone else, everyone needs to respect each other and their differences. Just because someone is attracted to the same gender or doesn't feel comfortable with their birth-assigned gender, does not mean they should be treated differently.

It could be hard to teach the whole world, but we can keep it on social media, teach your kids and even teach them in schools because LGBTQIA's shouldn't be left out. Everyone needs to know that no matter who they are, there are people that accept them and they are valid and even if they don't get treated like everyone else, there are always people that care.

If you are gay, lesbian, bisexual, pansexual, queer, transgender, genderfluid, any gender or sexuality you are. you are loved, you are valid, you are accepted, you are you and that's what's best. And so many people don't respect peoples decisions of who they are.

And this is where the respect will start and the homophobia to end. ■



Kiralee Andersen
Year 11 · Padua College

Changing path



Elian Deeb
Year 7 · Whitefriars College

Respect for Nature

Fine-liner and drawing, Photoshop manipulation, painting.

Influenced by Aboriginal artwork and our Australian heritage.



Jon Escobar
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Uncertain world



Xavier Barker
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

RESPECT: 'Together United'

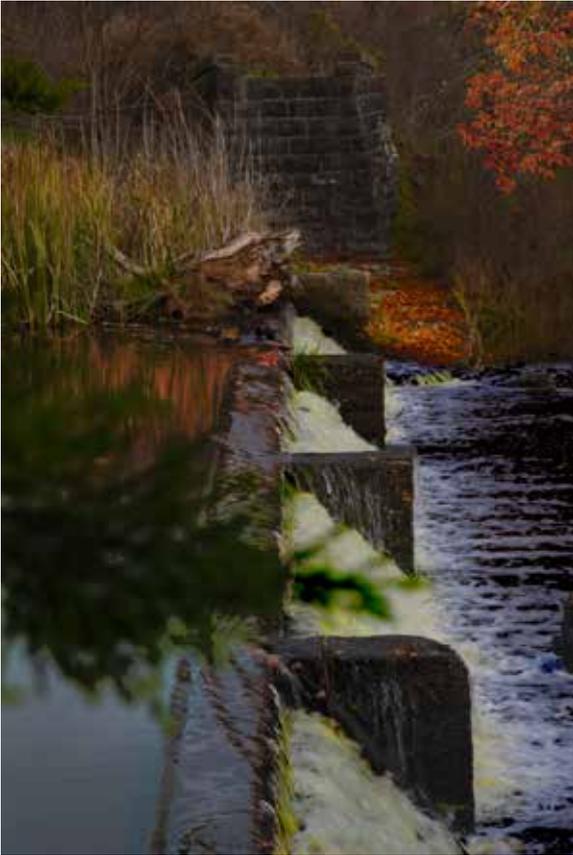
Photography + Photoshop

I captured this photograph at the rally in Melbourne seeking justice for George Floyd, an African-American who was killed during a police arrest. As an Australian, I wanted to take part in the protests to show solidarity and support in the fight for: The 'Black Lives Matter' protests, and to demonstrate against issues with police brutality and institutional racism and racism in Australia.



Leon Papanastasiou
Year 9 · Whitefriars College

Digital Art



Max Tyler
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Living Water

Photography + Photoshop.

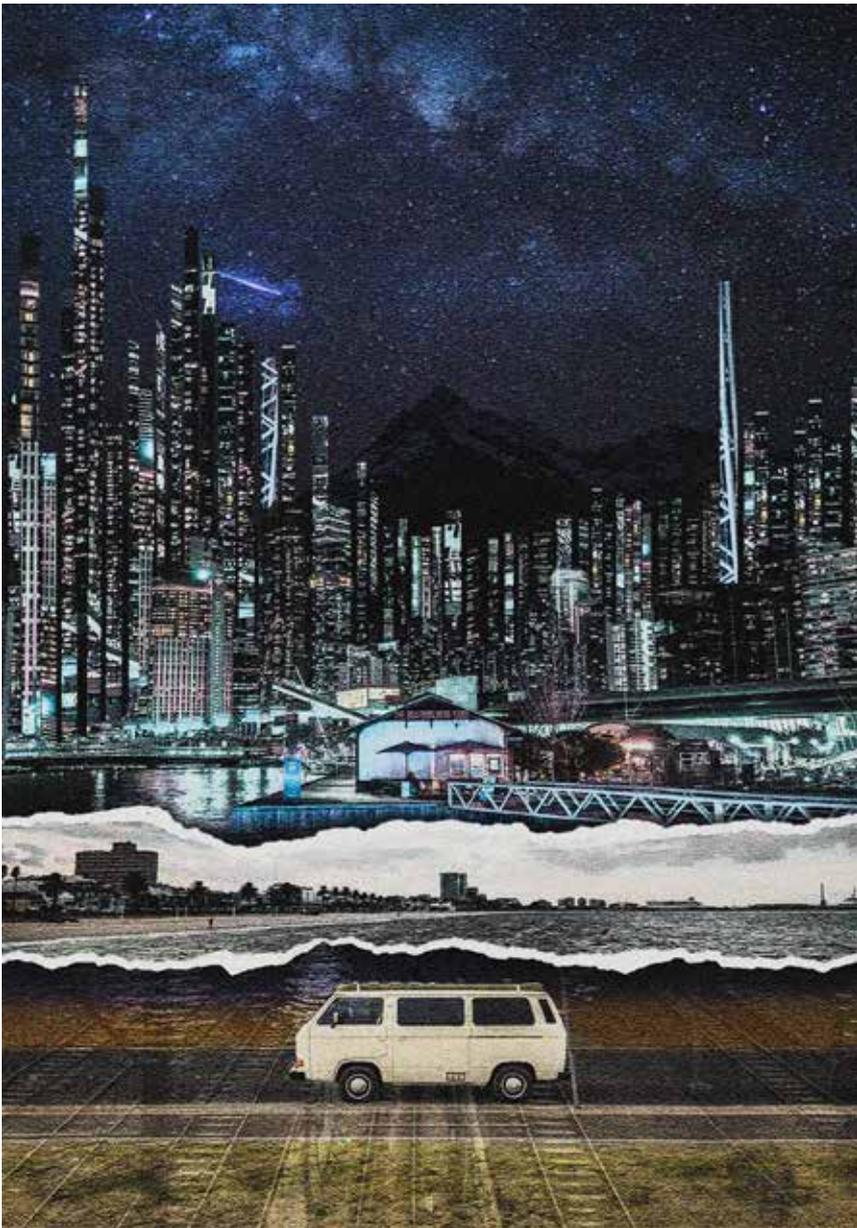
“The Lord will cause living water, to flow from within you forever, when you truly come to know, Jesus Christ, eternal waters flow. Through the Holy Spirit my friend, His living water will never end.”

From the poem ‘*Living Water*’ artwork, inspired by the poem of Bob Gotti.



Xavier Barker
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Look for the light



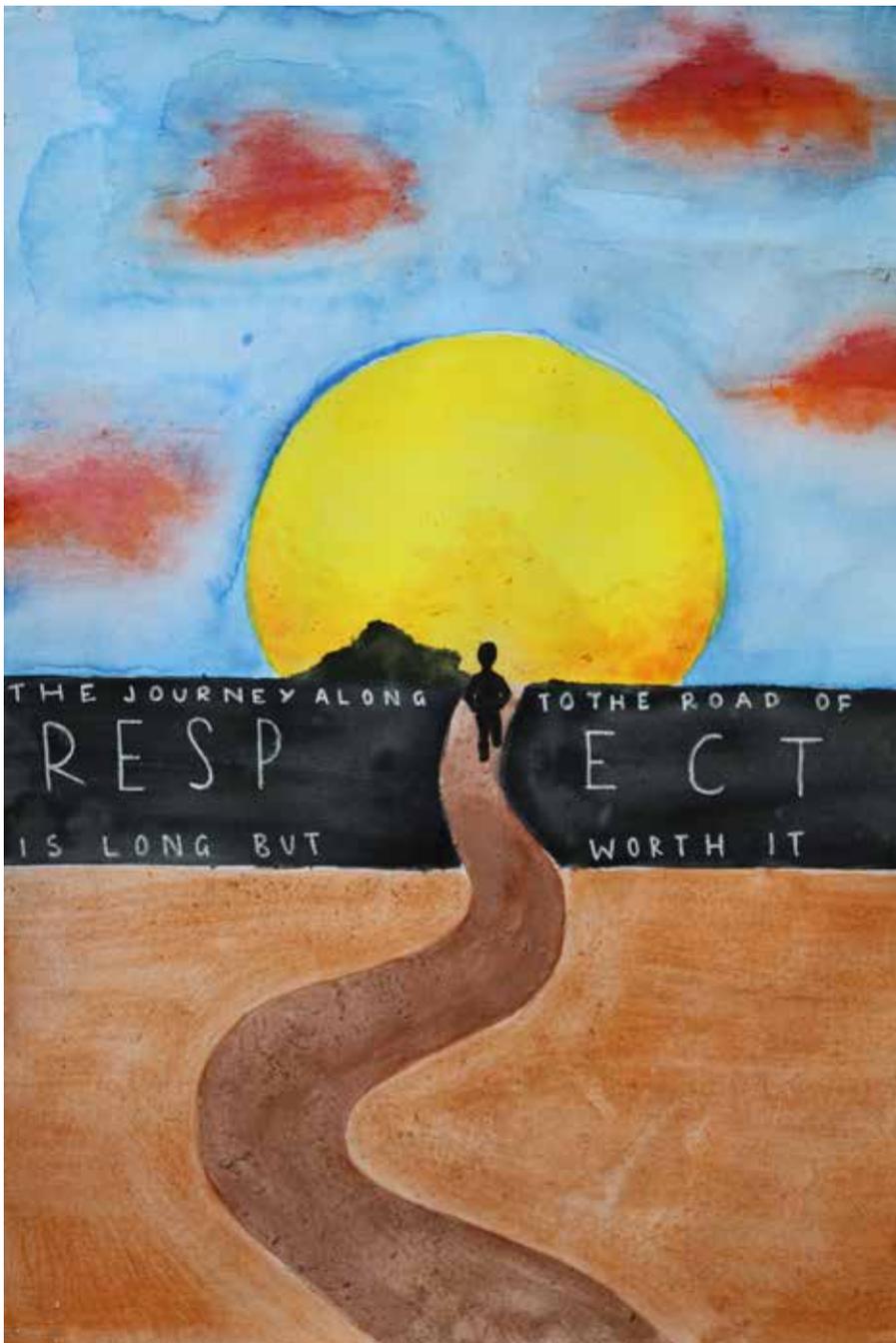
(Kevin) Wing Cheung Hui
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

Adventure 1



(Kevin) Wing Cheung Hui
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

Adventure 2



Jade Navarro
Year 9 · John Paul College

The Road to Respect

I think Respect is one of the most important aspects of our life that needs to be displayed amongst others, but it can easily be taken for granted. The “road” symbolises how sometimes we need to prove ourselves through hard work and determination to garner respect. Although, we should already have at least some respect for ourselves, I believe that if you want others to respect you, then you must show the same amount of respect to them.



Sebastian De La Parra
Year 9 · John Paul College

Don't be racist

This artwork is about seeing people as the same and treating them like you would want to be treated.



Sienna Uboldi
Year 9 · John Paul College

Respect through religion

This drawing is about loving and respecting everyone through religion.



Sienna Hartskeerl
Year 9 · John Paul College

World Respect

My piece is about having respect for the Earth that we live on. The sunflower represents how precious and beautiful our world is and how we need to do more to protect it.

CANDLE

Erin Webster · Year 9 · *Star of the Sea College*

The anachronistic doorbell rang. Her sparkling eyes, fringed with long black lashes intently scanned the room with determination in search of someone and when they discreetly met mine her cherry red lips quirked upward into a joyous smile. “Aunty Viv!” I screeched as she embraced me tightly. Her neatly combed ringlets were hanging loosely around her beaming face like a frame protecting a piece of expensive artwork. Her eyes shone into mine, calm and emotionless, she had long wavy toffee brown hair that looked as if it had been tailored from gold fabric and her perfectly plucked brows sculpted her distinguished face. She had been a flower in full bloom since the first day I met her. Her bright red lipstick flamed like scarlet wine as sunshine radiated from her smile that shone like the stars in the sky with no city to dim them.

“Where is your Dad? I must say hello” she said. As she swiftly made her way over to him, I made the effort to go and greet Aunty June and the cousins. The arranged array of sumptuous food sent my mind into a happy tingle of possibilities, however as I turned around, I couldn’t help but notice my Dad. His sharp, chestnut eyes were coiling into a maze of forbidden thoughts, and sadness clouded my head as I spiraled on the grief and sorrow that my Dad was faced with. I can’t help thinking that it is my fault that she is gone. Burning flames disintegrated in my head as I reflected. “Ready to go?” Aunty Viv asked as she startled me from behind. My eyes lit up. “Yep,” I asserted as I quickly ran and grabbed the perfectly wrapped birthday present from my room.

I eagerly jumped up into Aunty Viv’s arctic blue Sedan. It felt like forever since I had been to a birthday party. She started the car which at first sounded like a piece of old, rusty clockwork. As the car engine continued to sing to the lone country roads, I listened to the roaring winds that twirled in my untamable cocoa brown hair and whistled in my porcelain ears. “Only half an hour to go!” Aunty Viv excitedly explained, however the road ahead was an endless ribbon of tarmac that eventually melted out into the smokey gray horizon that lay ahead in the far distance.

Aunty Viv broke the awkward silence by politely offering to turn the radio on which I graciously agreed to. We were peacefully cruising along until I heard a familiar tune. “This was your Mum’s favourite song,” I heard her whisper under her breath as the colour started to drain from her prominent face. I watched her manicured hands start to tremble as a droplet of grief slowly rolled

down her hollow cheeks. “You miss her,” I suggested as I turned the radio down ever so slightly. “Very much,” she replied softly. I sniffled quietly as the tears threatened to spill from my eyes. I wanted to act strong for my Aunt but I couldn’t help it when the tears escaped me. I buried my head in my hands as if I was a baby kangaroo in her pouch. Aunty Viv gazed over and clutched onto my quivering hands which she squeezed tightly. After Mum, she had been the only one there for me and my Dad and I could never be more grateful to her.

I glanced out the window to notice that we were gradually building up speed on the charcoal gravel so fast that the passing greenery was starting to become a hazy blur. In the distance, I identified what appeared to be a crow perched on a branch in the middle of the road. “Caw, caw” the bedraggled beast screeched as we willfully halted to a stop. The creature’s eyes narrowed and darted at me, it was as if it was observing me, trying to tell me something. His fluorescent white eyes were piercing straight into my soul and I couldn’t help but feel as if it was watching me. Aunty Viv was just about to make her way out of the car to shoo it away, however after singing a few more notes, the creature ascended back up through the clouds and out of sight.

“Finally,” I heard Aunty Viv mutter under her breath as the car started again. But before she had time to say anything more, a four-wheel drive came ploughing through the bushes. It was heading straight for us at what seemed like a million miles an hour. My heart started racing, pounding in my chest like an elephant. I heard Aunty Viv scream! The world started passing by in a blur of red and white lights. The cars screeching brakes and skidding tires on the wet pavement shattered the immense silence of the car trip. The seatbelt tugged aggressively at my irritated skin with every lurch and the airbag was slowly deflating. The car spun completely out of control straight towards the oncoming car. A waterfall of cascading glass and images of Dad, Aunty June, Aunty Viv, Grandpa Jim, the cousins and my favourite tree were flashing past.

The world must have kept flickering its light switch because my vision kept flashing from blaring white light to total bitter darkness. Throughout the inky space, my heart pounded vociferously, echoing in my ears. Blinding white light was hitting me from all angles, invading my vision. A warm and somewhat welcoming hand had been offered...familiarity... the opportunity for true happiness. All feeling in my body drained away until finally all was black, and just like that, my candle was blown out. ■

FROM MOTHER TO DAUGHTER

Hannah Furey · Year 9 · *Star of the Sea College*

I have been waiting for this moment for so many years, but sadly it has come sooner than expected. My darling baby, come here and let me give you a big bear hug. Look at you, you have grown into a beautiful young lady. Your hair smells like freshly picked flowers and your blue eyes sparkle like sun on water. I am so proud of you. You have so much bravery and courage like when I watched you be the shining star of your musical performance at your school's assembly. You continued to sing in front of all those people even when they started laughing at you. You kept a brave face and your cousins supported you. Your brilliant cooking creations with your cousins, putting salt in the cake instead of sugar. Even though it was something different to eat for dessert, Aunty Viv still liked what you created and that's what families do, we support and care for each other. So many times I would have liked to thank Aunty Viv and Aunty June for taking care of you when I was unable to. The fateful night of the accident was like a bullet through my chest. Although I wasn't there to experience it in real life, the sorrow I felt for you, your father and Aunty Viv engulfed me like a tsunami racing to shore. It pained me to see your father and Aunty Viv suffer for the second time.

You know, you remind me a lot of myself. When I first laid eyes on your father I knew it was meant to be. But it was very difficult. As you know your father's dad was the chief of police and only followed life by laws and rules. So when he found out that his son was getting married to an aboriginal woman, he didn't want anything to do with your father and me. It's not easy to love someone that isn't part of your culture but our love for each other was stronger than their hate. There were many obstacles that we came across but each

one, we could work it out together. When we had you, it was like our whole life was complete. We had each other and a little Beth that we would forever love and cherish.

I got my own strength from my mother Bonnie. She was the strongest person I ever knew and I would often hear about the many hardships that she endured. I remember watching your grandmother, Bonnie wipe away the tears that were rolling down her face as she told me her heartbreaking story of being forcibly taken away at the age of 5, from her loving family. She woke up to screaming and shouting. Not knowing what was going on, she went to figure out what all the noise was about. She was immediately grabbed by a tall and well-built white fella. Her mother pulled her back and said "Don't ever forget where you come from". Before her mother could say anything else, the white fella snatched Bonnie back and put her on the truck. These white people thought they were doing the right thing. They thought if they took innocent aboriginal children and forced them to adopt white culture and reject their indigenous heritage, that they will be better off. Mother said that most of the kids had to change their names and they all were forbidden to speak their traditional languages. Not a day went by when grandmother Bonnie was not thinking on how to get back to her family and thankfully many years later she was reunited with them. Now her strong heritage continues and will do for many more generations to come.

Thank you for taking care of your father when he lost his child. Even though we have had hardships of our own, we have never forgotten the most important thing, family is there for each other in life and in death. ■

A 'MOTLEY BROKEN CREW'

Michaela Brooks · Year 10 · Star of the Sea College

A creative piece based on the novel, 'Diving into Glass' by Caro Llewellyn

I am neither good nor bad. I am neither a blessing nor a curse. I am simply inevitable. This is what I have learnt. In the beginning I believed I had all the power. The power to ruin, the power to save. But I was taught otherwise.

Her mother, she chose a union with less than a dog. I dealt her the cards belonging to this choice. She suffered the consequences. I had the power to ruin.

Her father, I dealt him a trump card. I should have had the power to ruin. But he taught me I did not. My trump card, my ruin card, was his favourite one. My ruin card took him on his greatest adventure. He embraced me, thanked me. This made me angry.

He found a new wife. A miracle, a saviour. I did not deal her a ruin card. I saved it for his daughter.

I decided, I'll show him. I have all the power. No one thanks me for my ruin cards. He had a daughter, this was my chance. She'll get some ruin cards all right, and she won't like it. You'll see, Llewellyn, I am in control.

Her father had the nerve to say "I'm your fall guy". Wrong! I am your fall guy. Your headfirst-into-danger guy. Your unfortunate-events guy. And so I broke her mother.

Her mother needed independence, but oops! Here comes a second child. Her mother loved her father, but oops! He's gone, what convenient timing. Thus the daughter was raised with broken parents, one physically and one mentally. How cruel of Fate, how cruel of me.

My work here is done. I've cursed the girl with an unstable mother. She's sure to follow suit.

Yet what is this, 16 years later? She's moved out, escaped the mess. I'll see how this pans out. Well look at that, she's moved to London. Her days are spent with drugs and booze. She's running from her memories. Hurrah! I have succeeded. You see, dear Richard, I hold the power. I can curse, I can bless. A few little triggers for her mother, a traumatic childhood results. A simple twist from me and there we have it, the girl is cursed. She cannot recover now.

I watch her. She walks into the laundromat. She sees the noticeboard, considers. I wonder how

she recognises her life has become unravelled. I wonder where she gets the will to stop the wild, start afresh. Yet have it she does, as she reaches for that piece of paper, the one that will re-route her. I am cocky, I am proud. I let her take it, there's no way she can undo what I have sealed her.

Her new employers are creative and clever. They are literary people, the kind the daughter has been unknowingly waiting to find. She soon finds she too is creative, clever. The new chapter of her life unravels *me*, she soon becomes successful, happy. She has her ups and downs, but the curse I'd been sure I'd placed on her did not exist. I am fed up. She lives in the city of productivity and prosperity. Her greatest wish, for her son to move to New York, comes true. This is the final straw.

She's running in Central Park when it happens, butter-yellow light painting dappled patterns on the autumn leaves. I snap. Amber-yellow liquid begins running down her legs and she stumbles into the bushes in panic and confusion. There is no way she can recover from this. Her days of living life for both herself and her father are gone. She will suffer like her father, and she won't thank me.

Months pass and I triumph. The daughter is finally broken. She rejects all treatment – no support groups, no medication – and asks constantly 'why me?'. She falls apart, my job is done. So, you see, I have the power to ruin, the power to save. I can curse, I can bless.

I am victorious. Until. She walks, shopping bags in hand, fresh clothes on her steadily fattening body. A little girl skips, she trips. She trips and falls, glass smashes, blood runs. She is defeated. And yet there is that instinct, the one that drew her to the literary cleaning job. It returns, calls 'pull yourself together.' She picks herself up, walks on. The instinct niggles, she turns left, finds herself inside. Inside a physiotherapist.

That damn instinct of hers. She improves. She has found her support group amongst what she describes as a 'motley broken crew'. This group marks another turning point. She takes control again.

I am defeated. I cannot save, cannot ruin. I cannot bless, cannot curse. I do not have all the power. Yes, I can deal my cards, but I cannot decide how people respond to what they are dealt. Their response is what blesses, curses. The father taught me this, the daughter reinforced it. ■



Matilda Bolton
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College



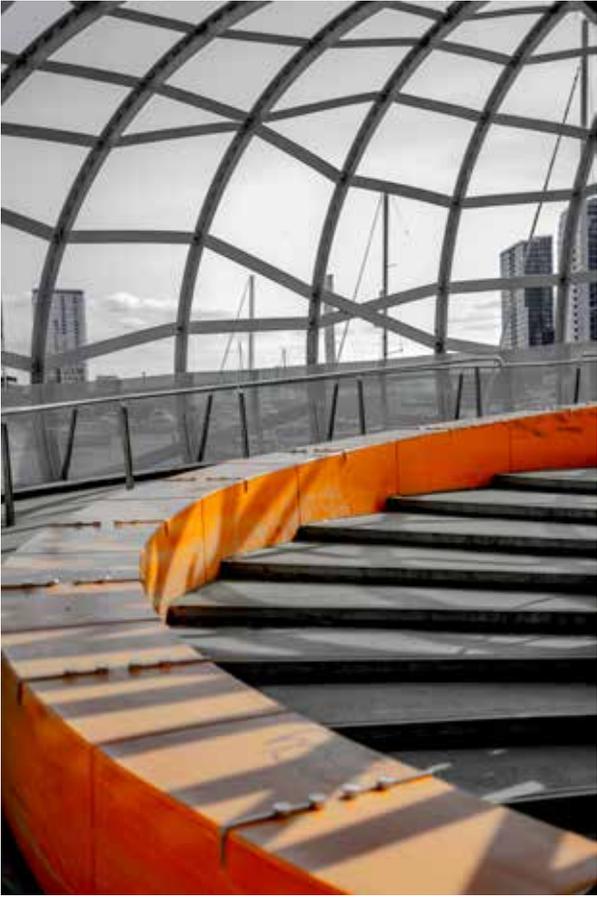
Sabrina Ellis
Year 10 · Star of the Sea College



Xavier Barker
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

Vacant 2020; Leading Lines 1-3

An emptiness falls like a thick fog as lockdown is initiated. A respect for what is missing in our lives is felt deeply as the streets, buildings and cities fall silent and grind to a halt. It is only now we stop and feel the nostalgia of what has been lost.





Patricia Capacete
Year 12 · St. Peter's College



Samuel Rook
Year 11 · St. Peter's College

WHY IS RESPECT SO IMPORTANT?

Taylor-Marie Stockmann Loughnan · Year 9 · St. Peter's College

Morally, respect is something that is required of everyone. Though everybody has different views on what is respectful and what is not, there is a level of respect that is expected when you talk to different people. For example, when you meet a stranger you are naturally polite and detached. You do not have an intimate relationship with this person, therefore the level of respect you express is the basic level that you would extend to all fellow human beings. While the respect extended to a friend may be more as that person has built or earned additional levels of respect. While some people are more respectful than others, respect is necessary in your behaviour to hold compassion and empathy, as these emotions are only truly felt if we have a basic respect for all human beings and/or living things. The way you hold yourself, for example, can have a significant effect on those around you, which is why respectful behaviour is important. Though something may not affect you that does not mean it cannot affect the people around you. It is important to keep this in mind as you live your daily life. But there are multiple aspects of respect. The respect you show other living beings, the respect you hold for yourself, and the respect you hold for your belongings and the belongings of others/the environment and the Earth we all share.

“First impressions last a long time” is a very accurate quote to explain why respect is so important. First impressions leave a big impact on people because you may never see some of these people again, and the only way you will remember them is from how they conducted themselves in the first place. If someone was rude to you in their first impression, whatever their reasons may be, you will be more inclined to see that person in a negative light. Whereas if someone was polite and respectful you will see that person in a more positive light. That is just human nature and being respectful may be indicative of ethical behaviour. Not a guarantee as ethical standards vary, but a large indicator. Ethical, loosely meaning right, against wrong. Ethical behaviour also includes being honest, fair, trustworthy, having professionalism and dignity, and believing in equality. These are all ethical acts in the eyes of Australia and align with the rest of the world. Socially acceptable ethics so to speak. While we are not born with innate respect, we learn that from our parents, peers, siblings, and friends, and if this fails and we are not taught to be respectful then we learn the harder way when we grow up. The result of lack of respect for each other leads, potentially, to the law being broken, due to a lack of respect for the law and societies commonly accepted rules of behaviour, as well as possible a breach of humanity, when that basic respect for

others is not present. The amount of respect that each person deserves comes down to independent decision. Has that person earned my respect? Is that person known for certain actions that demand respect? Is that person in a role that commands respect such as law enforcement? We all have our subjective views on who deserves the most respect out of our own experiences. This makes respect highly variable from person to person, experience to experience. Respect is also a very hard thing to earn back once it's been broken. Someone saying they respect you greatly should be considered as a huge compliment, and breaking that respect means you have broken their trust, and trust is difficult to earn back.

Self-respect is just as important if not more important than outward respectful behaviour. This is because if you do not respect yourself to an extent, then the respect you plan to give out to everyone around you will fall short. To be genuine and respectful takes a balance of confidence and humbleness. Knowing that there is a line that everybody has called personal space, and not to cross it without permission. Tolerance and acceptance of other people's choices and opinions, acknowledging right to freedom and life and caring for the environment in which we live- these are all examples of what respect is. Of course, coming to understand this better takes experience, but learning this from early life would be beneficial to your future. Self-respect is crucial to grow confidence and confidence is crucial to get a good job, speak publicly, and when you are confident people are more likely to listen to you as well as believe you. Being confident also often makes people determined and that determination is important for future success. However, there is a fine line between being confident and being narcissistic. While confidence is attractive, being a narcissist has the opposite effect. Nobody wants to listen to someone who only cares about themselves and what they can gain. Being a narcissist means you think you are most important and deserve more than everyone else, and no employer in the future is going to see that and hire you. So once again the way you hold yourself and the attitude you project onto other people can rub others the wrong way.

Respect is not a new concept; an example can be traced back to when Leo Tolstoy Spoke: “Respect was invented to cover the empty place where love should be. But if you don't love me, it would be better and more honest to say so.” I believe Tolstoy was saying that being dishonest and leading someone on is disrespectful. It is hurtful and misleading and should not be done no matter how good the intentions are. In 1526-1583

it was recorded that respect is to hold “esteem for a person, thing, or quality”. From then on, the meaning of respect has been built upon to become a big foundation of our society. We must respect our labour workers, our medical workers, our creative artists, and anybody who is anybody building on the worlds ecosystem, our industry, and consistently moving our technology forward. Being productive and seeing everyone working together to move forward and make the future better than it is now is something that should be respected. If we keep this mindset up, respect will continue to grow in importance and continue to

spread the message we should all want to spread. Let us work together, grow together, and make every new day a better day than it was yesterday.

In my opinion, everyone deserves respect until they prove otherwise. Being outright rude, insensitive, and counterproductive helps no one therefore until they earn that respect by being willing to change, respect is not necessary. If everybody had a basic respect for each other, the world would be a much better place than it is now. Until that happens simply being respectful and not letting anyone affect your confidence negatively is the best you can do. ■



Matt Ludlow
Year 8 · St. Peter's College



Veronica Kobbaji
Year 11 · St. Peter's College

Natural Beauty

The woman figure to represent Mother nature, while the plants and animals represent her creations and her love for them. This illustration symbolises my respect for nature, as I have a deep appreciation for our planet and all its natural beauties.



Xena Kamal
Year 7 · St. Peter's College



Isabella Duiker
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Tristan Vichittavong
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



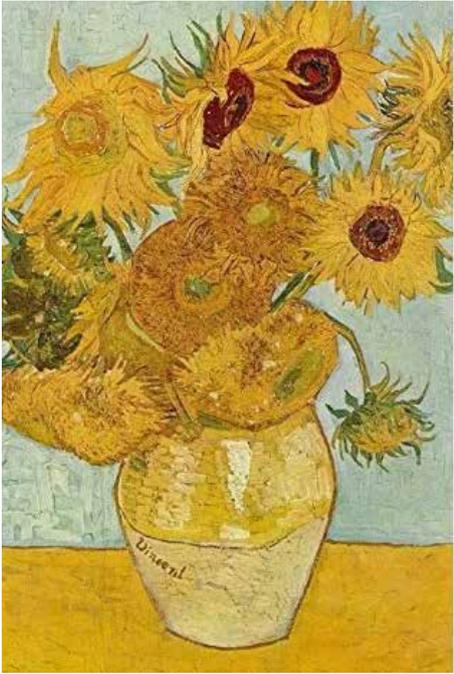
Adam Gilchrest
*Year 10 · St John's
Regional College*

Homage to Rothko



Alliyah Manoop
*Year 10 · St John's
Regional College*

Homage to Banksy



Charlie Barry
*Year 10 · St John's
Regional College*

Homage to Van Gogh



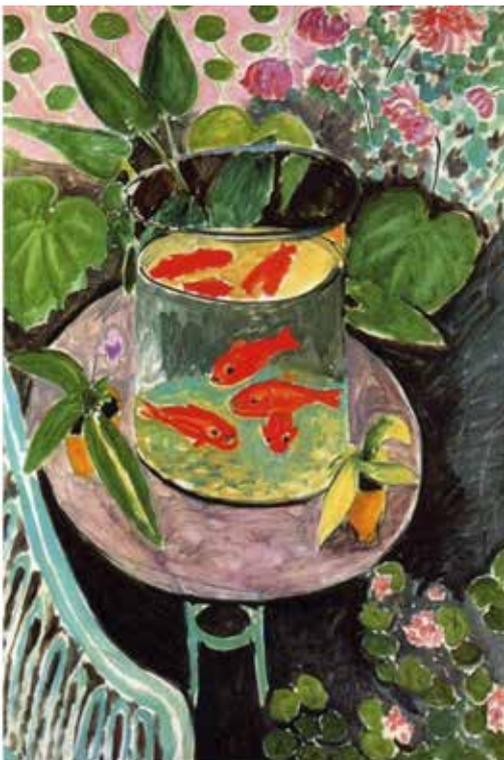
Kalani Sepalage
Year 10 · St John's Regional College

Homage to Raphael



Chloe Johns
Year 10 · St John's Regional College

Homage to Van Gogh



Vanessa Suson
Year 10 · St John's Regional College

Homage to Matisse



Madeline Russell
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Respect for the fictional characters from TV shows and movies that got me through tough times.

THANK YOU!

Abigale Hirschfield and Isabelle Ambrose · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

For the front-line workers who were always there
You helped us in the times that just we could not bear
To the medical officers we thank you
We know what a struggle you've been through
For the people who lost someone they loved
We are sorry for your loss, and we hope your happiness is
not, forever smudged
Thank you to the parents out there
Who gave their children all your love and care
Thank you to the shop workers who restocked the shelves
And stayed calm even though some customers yelled
And thank you to the public for keeping a distance
It has helped keep the human existence. ■

UNICORN

Lacie Smith · Foundation
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Unicorn
Colourful, fluffy,
Trotting, feeding, flying
Happy with her mane
Magical ■

SNEAKY FRED

Jack McKenzie · Foundation
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

There once was a sneaky frog called Fred,
Who loved to pretend he was dead.
He fell fast asleep,
And his friends started to weep,
And he thought it was really funny! ■

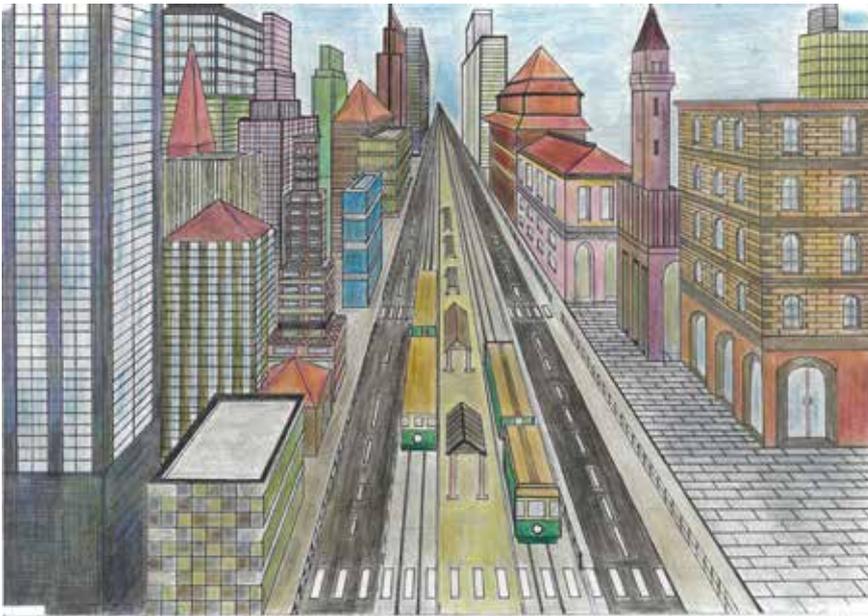


Nicole Formaran
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Respect the Drip Karen

Inked Watercolour

It is a portrait of my dear friend Josh who I think represents the word respect within a teenage society.

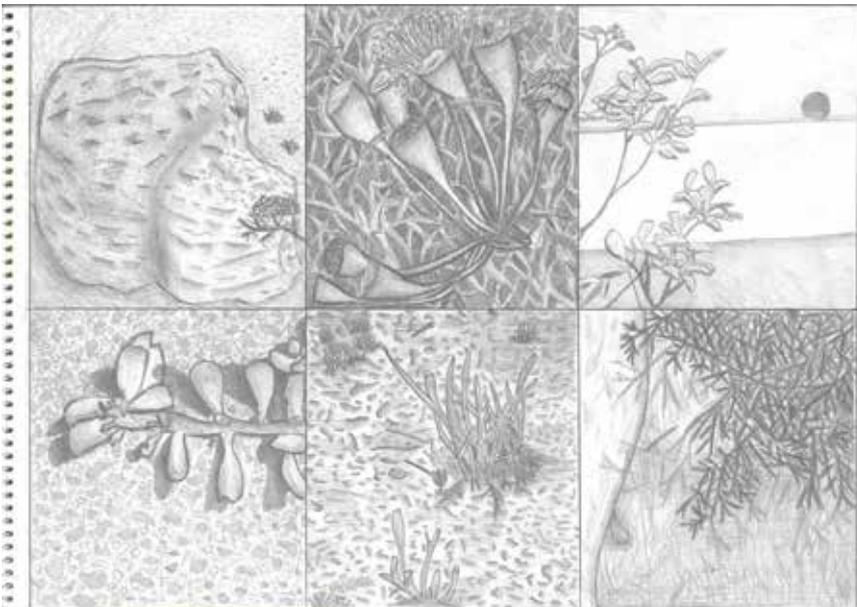


Robert Di Giovine
Year 8 · Mazenod College

Melbourne Streets

*Manual drawing – One point
Perspective, Coloured pencil and
Fineliner*

This work explores the hustle and bustle of everyday citylife in Melbourne CBD. The dreary colours demonstrate the mood and feel during COVID 19 and the isolation felt by all.



Tristan D'Souza
Year 10 · Mazenod College

6 stories

Graphite pencil on paper

This work is about working in harmony with the natural world around us.



Andre Almodiel
Year 9 · Mazenod College

Still Life Isolation

Digital Illustration

The work explores the mundane day-to-day life of students in lockdown.



Antony Limeira-Beaton
Year 10 · Mazenod College

Flower Power

Graphite pencil on paper

This work uses flowers to symbolise peace and respect towards nature.



Cairns Lowe
Year 10 · Mazenod College

Buddha

Acrylic paint on clay

This work is concerned with demonstrating respect towards all religious beliefs.

CRUNCH! CRUNCH!

Dolly Baldwin · Foundation
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Crunch! Crunch!
The chips are in the bag.
When they are all gone,
It makes me sad. ■

SLOTH

Emma Milum · Year 1
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Sloth
Brown, three-toed
Sleeping, climbing, eating
They are very shy
Forest ■

LOCKDOWN

Jack Fraser · Year 2
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Lonely lives in lockdown,
Laughter seems so limited.
Lost like a leopard,
Lonely like a lion. ■

BRRR, BRRR!

Madison Crinis · Year 1
St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Splash, splash!
I'm on a bumpy boat.
Brrr, brrr!
I'm glad I brought my coat. ■

THE DARK BRIGHTSIDE

Stella Rowse · Year 6 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Locked up inside like I'm in
prison.
Nowhere to go.
No places to be.
No one to see.
I feel lost.
I have a covering on my face,
Hiding my emotions.
I want to be free.
I feel trapped.
Working all day.

No time to play.
Like a feather on air,
With nothing to spare.
I feel stressed
As each day passes.
I venture out.
I feel the cool fresh breeze
brush against my face,
And the crisp long grass
touching my ankles.
I see other people.

I stop and realise that it's not just
me who feels like this.
It's not just me who feels locked
up inside.
It's everyone.
We are in this together.
This is an experience only we
will understand.
We are a part of history.
I tell myself to look at the bright
part in the dark
And you will always find one. ■



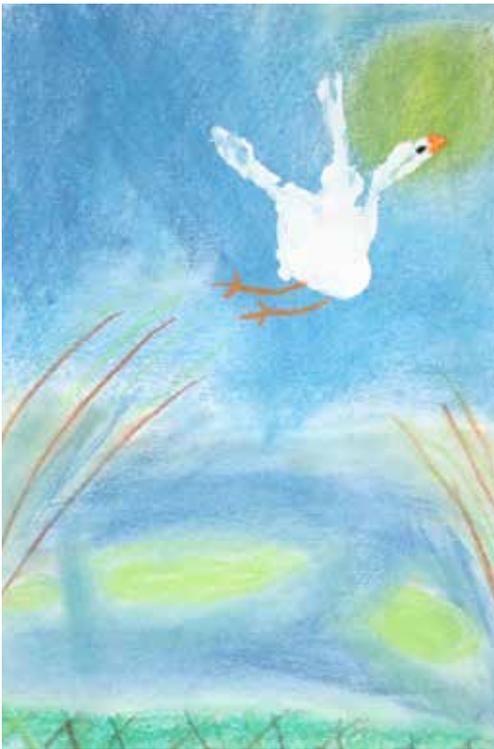
Nazara Zara
*Year 3 · St James Catholic
Primary School Brighton*

Warm Hands, Cool Background



Raphaela Trist
*Year 6 · St James Catholic
Primary School Brighton*

Self Portrait



Hugh Harrington
 Year 2 · St James Catholic
 Primary School Brighton

Lucy Goosey at the Pond



Ptolemy Killis
 Year 2 · St James Catholic
 Primary School Brighton

Lucy Goosey at the Pond



Charlie Pfahl
 Year 3 · St James Catholic
 Primary School Brighton

Spider print

Lyla Poulus
 Year 3 · St James Catholic
 Primary School Brighton

Dragonfly print





Audrey Henderson
*Year 2 · St James Catholic
Primary School Brighton*

Chester Spots an Iceberg



Charlotte Lynch
*Year 3 · St James Catholic
Primary School Brighton*

Goldfish



Eve Hansen
Year 1 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Rainbow Hair

NEARLY HOME

Lachlan Stevenson · Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

It has been raining for days, I still can't get the mud off my shoes, it's making everything feel so heavy. My body is freezing and we've almost finished the small amount of food we had left. All I can hear is guns firing and the screams of scared soldiers from across the fields. I can't stop thinking about my family at home, we would all sit around the table eating dinner, laughing and talking about our day and it was always warm.

"Pick up your bags!" the sergeant screamed. "Start walking", he said. He would kick us every time we didn't do something he instructed. Thomas and I moved quickly. I had met Thomas on my first day when we arrived here. He had offered to help me set up my tent. We quickly became good friends and relied on each other. We have spent hours talking and sharing stories about our lives back home and our families. Our friendship is what has made this bearable. Thomas has had a very different life to me, he spent most of his childhood living on the streets with his mum and dad, he had done it hard, but he still always looked so happy when he spoke of his family and shared his stories with me.

Thomas had told me they didn't have much, but they had each other and his parents had given him a life of love and had done the best they could. Thomas had joined the Army because he wanted to have a safe home, a group of mates to be his extended family and to earn money to help support his parents. He had so much respect for his mum and dad and how hard their life had been and wanted to be able to help them and make it easier for them. I often thought to myself how easy I had it compared to Thomas and many other fellow soldiers that had come from different backgrounds to me.

I always had a warm bed, a hot meal and the love of my family and was able to do anything I wanted. I now realise I had taken that for granted.

We continued to walk through the bush, it was so thick, I was using my hands to try and push trees and shrubs out of my way and to make it easier for those coming behind me, I always wanted to do my part to help my mates, we needed to stick together. Rain kept coming down in buckets, it was filling our boots, they were becoming heavier and heavier with each step. It was so hard to keep moving as we were so hungry, tired and wet. The sergeant kept yelling at us, we always answered with, "Yes Sir!".

Sergeant Jim, or as we men would like to call him "Big Jim", was a tall man who was intimidating. I didn't mind calling him Sir though, because my Dad had always told us this showed respect and I did respect Sergeant Jim. Even though he spent so much time yelling and giving us orders, he had to make decisions that would affect us all and was the difference in us coming home or not.

"Stop!", Thomas yelled. I stopped in my tracks; my shoes were actually stuck in the mud as I swung my head around. I could see that Thomas and two other men had fallen over and were stuck in the mud with their packs. I could see Sergeant Jim's face and he was not happy, we didn't have time for this as we needed to get back to camp as there was a plane coming for us.

We did what we always did and began to help each other under the instructions of Sergeant Jim. One person tied a rope around their waste and held onto a tree and we formed a human chain with me on the end, I reached my hand out to Thomas first, "Grab my hand," I yelled. "We've got you". Thomas used what strength he had left and reached up to my hand. "Pull," Sargent yelled. Everyone dug their heels in trying not to fall over themselves. One by one we got everyone out and began to move forward again.

The trees were starting to get less dense so I knew we must be getting closer to camp. The rain had also eased, this made it so much easier to see where we were going. The closer we got the quicker I could sense everyone was moving, the thought of getting out of here was giving everyone energy.

Finally we arrived, we knew we had to be quick as we had to be ready to go as soon as the plane arrived. We rushed around trying to pack our things, this was made so hard by all the mud and everything being wet. I started to look around at everyone, realising I wasn't sure when I would see some of these guys again, I had just spent twelve months with them every single day. They had saved my life on many occasions and I had for them as well. What about Sergeant Jim, I'm so used to him yelling orders?

It will be strange.

He could all hear the noise of the plane coming from high in the sky, there was a quiet cheer beginning to happen amongst us all, we slowly started to all line up in single file ready to board the cargo plane. I looked around so I could be in line with Thomas, we started this tour together and we needed to finish it together.

One by one we boarded the plane, as I stood halfway up the steps I turned to Thomas. We just nodded at each other as we took one last look back over the camp and I knew we both were thinking the same thing; we can't wait to be home.

We had all joined the Army for different reasons and didn't know what would happen, but we were all going home because we respected each other and the job we had to do. ■

UNTITLED

Nicholas Hilbert · Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

Nearly 700,000 deaths worldwide... More than 213 countries and territories in experiencing economic turmoil and decline... Approximately 25 million jobs lost globally, making 25 million people unemployed. Widespread, devastating effects upon mental health... It is hard to underestimate the horrific impact of the Coronavirus pandemic globally. The mental and physical suffering, death toll and economic hardship is unlike anything we have experienced in recent history. Yet for every low there is a high and it may be argued that even this difficult current situation has a silver lining. Indeed, without ignoring the frightening consequences of COVID-19, I will here be focussing upon some of the outcomes that could have a long-term positive impact on the planet and humanity.

One of the areas in which the positive effects of COVID-19 have been enormous is the environment. Since the first outbreak, China's carbon emissions have reduced by 25% and emissions of nitrogen oxide have reduced by 50%, which scientists estimate has saved around 77,000 lives. It is also estimated that greenhouse gas emissions in many EU countries may be the lowest since before World War II. In Venice, the water in the canals is suddenly clear with fish and other wildlife slowly returning as a result of less tourism and fewer boats polluting the water. Aircraft are typically responsible for around 7% of greenhouse gas emissions globally, but due to countries closing borders most flights have been grounded. With air travel and manufacturing coming to a halt during the pandemic, the earth has finally had a chance to heal and recover – and it shows what a big difference can be made to saving the planet in a short amount of time.

The outbreak of coronavirus is also creating hope that there will be less battles and increased global peace as many countries unite with each other to help fight a new enemy – the virus. The United Nations has issued a call to end all war, as Antonio Guterres declared “The fury of the virus illustrates the folly of war“. Pope Francis and others have tried to promote peace at this time too as the countries and regions affected by violence and war are also among those most vulnerable in this pandemic. France and Germany have donated masks and medical equipment to Italy; Luxembourg has taken intensive care patients from France; and the Czech Republic has donated protective suits to Italy and Spain. Closer to home Australia has sent more than \$100,000 million in foreign aid to help its Pacific neighbours such as Timor-Leste and Papua New Guinea in their economic recovery and response to the health crisis. For the first time in

decades countries regardless of their size, religion or political history are coming together to fight this pandemic.

In addition to a greater sense of unity internationally, there has also been greater connection on a more local, individual level. Social distancing and isolation required by coronavirus restrictions is challenging for humans who need contact and interaction with others. As a result, people are realising how important a sense of community is to their mental well-being and finding new ways of staying connected with family and friends through social media and technology. In Italy for example, which was one of the worse-hit countries with a very strict lockdown, locals united with their neighbours during this tragedy by singing and playing instruments on their balconies to boost each other's spirits.

As a result of lockdown, there has also been a huge increase in innovation across all areas of everyday life. Many businesses have had to be creative and adapt to using technology more and selling their goods and services online. The restaurants and cafes have changed to takeaway only, while other retail businesses have started selling more essential products like groceries, face masks and hand sanitiser. This ability to be flexible is especially obvious in education with schools and universities around the world forced to move to online or remote learning as a result of COVID. This has been a massive transformation – home schooling has become the new style of education with students taking more responsibility for their learning, and schools having to find creative ways to keep students engaged and challenged through technology.

Finally, one of the most important positives of the pandemic for me personally has been a greater sense of gratitude. COVID-19 has given me a new sense of perspective and I now have more appreciation for what really matters. Our lives have changed so dramatically, and we have all lost so many of the things that previously brought us joy and fulfilment. I also now realise how much I took for granted before – my freedom, my family and friends, my school and leisure activities. We are also so lucky to live in a first world country with excellent healthcare, and to have so many amazing essential workers who are willing to put their lives at risk every day to care for others. Hopefully when this crisis is over, we will all have more gratitude, be more present and change both ourselves and our world by continuing these positive effects on the environment, global peace, innovation and connection. ■

UNTITLED

Brady Ryan · Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

BANG! BANG! Timothy fled, he had no time to think about anything at all, he just ran. This had been happening since the start of the war. Flee, rest, come back into town, repeat. Each time he went to a different spot in town to avoid walking into battles between the two enemies and to find his parents.

He continued to run, gunshots from behind him blaring in his ear. He had to get away.

After running flat out for about 10 minutes, although it felt like an hour, he had to stop and take a break, or he was probably going to collapse. He looked around the countryside, he had been there before, but it didn't look like it normally would. This time all the fields were as quiet as a library, only the whisper of the wind was in his ear now. He figured that one of the enemies must have retreated because he couldn't hear the gunshots anymore.

Timothy spotted a cave which he recognised. He decided to go towards it. He was very cautious with every movement, he didn't want to be spotted by anyone. As he was walking, he found a parachute on the ground, this made Timmy petrified, he knew that someone had been here recently.

He continued to creep towards the cave. As Timothy approached it, he slowed to a stop, because he could hear someone in there. He crawled towards the edge, he didn't have time or energy to think, so he went to the outside wall and peeked in. What he saw was terrifying and confusing at the same time.

He could see an enemy soldier, but this soldier was not like he had seen before. This figure was lying down, sleeping and had his leg up. Timothy predicted that the man had injured his leg. As he continued scanning his eyes around the cave, he found a rope near a bag. He crept in the cave, got the rope and tied the man up.

Timmy sat there for 10 minutes, contemplating what to do. He couldn't think straight because he was starving, all he could think about was his stomach. Timmy decided to wake up the soldier, and he planned to ask what kind of food the man had. Before he went to do it, he saw a gun in the figure's pocket; a small handgun. Timmy decided to use it as a threat if he did anything unwanted. As he pulled out the gun, ID fell out of the soldier's pocket and Timmy discovered that he was dealing with a man called Igor. He put the ID back, turned the safety-lock on just in case he accidentally flicked the trigger, then woke Igor.

"Hello, my name is Timmy," greeted Timmy.

"Hello, my name is Igor..." replied Igor.

"What are you doing here?" asked Timmy. He agreed to find out as much about Igor before he said anything about himself.

"I am an enemy soldier, however, I don't want to be here. My family were killed in a war years ago, I am the last one left." Igor looked down, "I came here hoping to escape my hometown in Russia and be accepted by a family here, but I landed on the ground awkwardly, and it looks like I've broken my leg."

Timothy trusted the man, then he had a genius idea. He had forgotten about his hunger.

"I've got an idea," Timmy started, "I am stranded on my own, and I was separated from my family when the war started. If you help me get to my family, we will bring you in and you can stay with us."

"I'm in!" said Igor, "What are your parents' names?"

"Boris and Catherine Donald," Timmy replied, confused by the question.

"You're joking!" replied Igor to the puzzled Timmy. "I know exactly where they are. Don't worry, they are in good condition!"

"That's fantastic!" said Timmy, he never thought he would hear those words, especially from an enemy spy, "How do you know where they are?"

"Well, I was walking around the area that they are in and I saw a house. I crept up towards it," explained Igor, "I looked inside the window and your parents called each other by their names. I then peeked at a table and saw the name Donald on a shirt, so I figured that was whom I was dealing with. Then a helicopter picked me up and landed me here."

Some time passed since that moment, Igor and Timmy found a rover and drove around town to the other side where Igor knew Timmy's parents were.

As they continued driving down the dirt road, the pair and their trusty land rover approached a security stop. Timmy quickly hopped in the back and pulled a blanket over him. Igor and Timmy had already planned for this situation; Timmy's orders were to lie down as flat and straight as a plank, so it looked like the beat-up floor of the rover was a little bumpy. He was also told not to get into the boot because the security guards check the boot and not the middle row.

It was now Igor's chance to make his country proud and turn Timmy in.

"What is the password please sir?" said the officer in Russian.

"You will lose," replied Igor.

"Move on please," declared the officer.

"Um, excuse me officer. I have... I-I-I," Igor was stumbling, he didn't want to do it, "I have run out of ammo, do you have any spare?"

"No way," shouted the officer, "Get out of here!"

Igor drove on, relieved that he didn't turn Timmy in.

After about a minute, Igor called out to Timmy:

"You can get back in the front now," Igor said.

They drove on until they reached a house.

"Well Timmy, we're here..." Igor looked down.

"Oh, really!!" Timmy exclaimed, "Come o-"

"Igor, what's wrong?" Timmy asked.

"What if your parents don't like me?" Igor asked, nervously.

"I'm sure they will," Timmy replied, confidently, "Hey, come on. You have done your part of the deal, now it is time that I did mine!"

Timmy and Igor hopped out of the car and knocked on the front door. Igor was still injured, so Timmy had to assist him walking

"Who is it?!" asked Timmy's Dad on the other side of the door, a gun in his hand.

"Dad?"

The door opened...

"Timmy!!!!"

"Dad!" ■

UNTITLED

Theodore Schlicht · Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall

I stand on top of Cable Mountain, legs feeling weak from the strenuous hike to the peak. I look over the edge to see the whole of Cape Town, South Africa. What were once detailed houses are now a jungle of tiny squares. When I take my heavy backpack off my shoulders, I feel like nothing is holding me down, the high altitude and picturesque view adds to the feeling. I sit down to absorb the atmosphere; my eyes focus on the sapphire ocean. The light breeze carries the salty aroma across the mountain and even though its one kilometre away I feel like I'm right there, with my feet in the coarse sand. The subtle lines of white foam go in and out, my breathing mimics the motion. It's hard to imagine why some people fear it because as I sit there, I feel relaxed, despite being about to rappel down a mountain.

My moment of peace is interrupted as I realise what I came to do. I stand up and unzip my backpack full of ropes of all colours. The thought that these lines of fibres are the difference between life and death creeps into my head and makes me doubt what I'm doing. I pull out my harness and begin to attach it to my body, taking a long time, I'm stalling. I check each part four times over, I want to be certain. I stand up and walk over to the edge, I look over the side...I stop. A sudden chill runs through the veins of my body. I become stiff, like I'm screaming inside but no matter how

loud nothing happens. I eventually get a hold of myself and start to run away from the edge as if the petrifying drop to my death is chasing me. I run until there is no more space to go, I fall on the ground, digesting what has just happened. I know it's not real, but the trauma of the past keeps racing through my head, and I feel like I'm there.

This isn't the first time I've been here. It was two years ago. It was stormy. It was the worst day of my life. I was with my friend, and we were taking on the challenge of abseiling down Cable Mountain. The clouds looked menacing, and the wind was violent. We knew it was too dangerous, but we hadn't travelled all the way to just walk back home. The weather was too fierce, I lost someone close to me that day.

So, as I stand in the same position, this time alone, I doubt if I'm good enough for the challenge. My failure of the past might be a sign, a sign that I should've never continued with this. I should never have come here; it was a waste of time. I will never abseil again. I'm hopeless. My hands move towards my harness, to take it off and for me to travel back home. But a strange and unexpected feeling of motivation arises in me. There's a voice in my head telling me to stand up, to face the challenge, to respect myself. I pick myself up, walk over to the side and secure the rope to a sturdy tree. I step over the edge. ■



Jack Ghantous
Year 9 · Xavier College



Luca Sklavenitis
Year 9 · Xavier College

CATCH TELLER CROW

Julia Uytenbogaardt · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

This is it.
I'm trapped and I'm never getting out of here.
It's cold and dark.
I'm shivering and my fingers are going numb.
Everywhere I look is the same.
It's like I'm in a maze and I've just reached a
dead end.
Just like Crow said.
There's no *escape*. Not unless you're a dead girl.
But I don't want to be like Crow.
I just want to be free.

I'm afraid.
Fear consumes me, like an animal eating its prey.
They won.
And there's nothing I can do to stop them.
They're stronger.
Too strong for my tired, weak and useless body
slumped in the middle of an empty, dark room.
I'm a ball curled up.
I'm a glass thrown against rock.

Shattered. Bits of me everywhere.
And I can't find all the pieces to put me back
together.
There's no glue. No band aids. The cuts are too
deep for me to stitch.

I hear him coming.
His loud, slow footsteps echo against the stone
walls that surround emptiness.
I can already feel his claws digging into me.
Digging away my soul.
He's back to take away the only thing I have left
of me.
My colours.
And there's nothing I can do to stop him.
So I do the only thing I can do.

I think.
I think about my family. My ancestors. My Mum.
My Nanna.
I feel warmth in my heart.
A spark.
Hope. ■



Nickolas Blackney
Year 9 · Xavier College

FAVOURITE COLOUR (SPOKEN WORD POEM)

Tudor Labadin · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

When I was younger my father asked me what my favourite colour was.
I asked him, “What’s that?”
He replied, “What colour do you think is the best out of all the colours?”
I immediately thought of orange, since at the time orange seemed like the most appealing colour to me.
After that I went to school and asked my friend, “hey, what’s your favourite colour?”. He replied “Brown”. Now, was he wrong? No! His favourite colour was brown and I was in no position to change that.
But was his taste in colour bad? Yes! But that’s not relevant to what I’m trying to say.
Switching up the scenes again, the next day my father asked me, “what’s the difference between a boy and a girl?” I said, since I was young at the time, “Girls like girly things like dolls and pink, boys like boyish things like soccer and basketball.”
Later that day at school, I saw a girl playing basketball. So, my little confused young self asked myself “Is that girl a boy”? No! She’s a girl. Is she less than a girl and more of a boy? No. She’s still a girl!
After that I saw a boy playing with a group of girls. They were playing with dolls and toys. Is this boy a girl? No! He’s still a boy.
My point is that men like us are often pressured to do things that are more “manly” than other things. These pressures often come indirectly or subconsciously. No one really said it to you, but... it is sort of wired inside our heads.

In my opinion I feel like stereotypes has a major role in why we think this way. Stereotypes like men should not be emotional, men should be buff and strong, men should be the providers of the family. Really any stereotype that tries to define your masculinity.

Think of stereotypes like your favourite colour. Someone might suggest that brown is their favourite colour but is it the best colour? No! Similarly, men should be strong and buff. But is being strong and buff really what determines you as a man?

Stereotypes like this encourages men to act like someone who they are not. A façade that masks who they truly are inside. Things like this are unhealthy, we know that. They cause a lot of mental health issues in men like us.

Think of manliness like a kaleidoscope of all the colours. If I described the kaleidoscope as only red in colour, I am just not telling the full story, I am just scratching the surface.

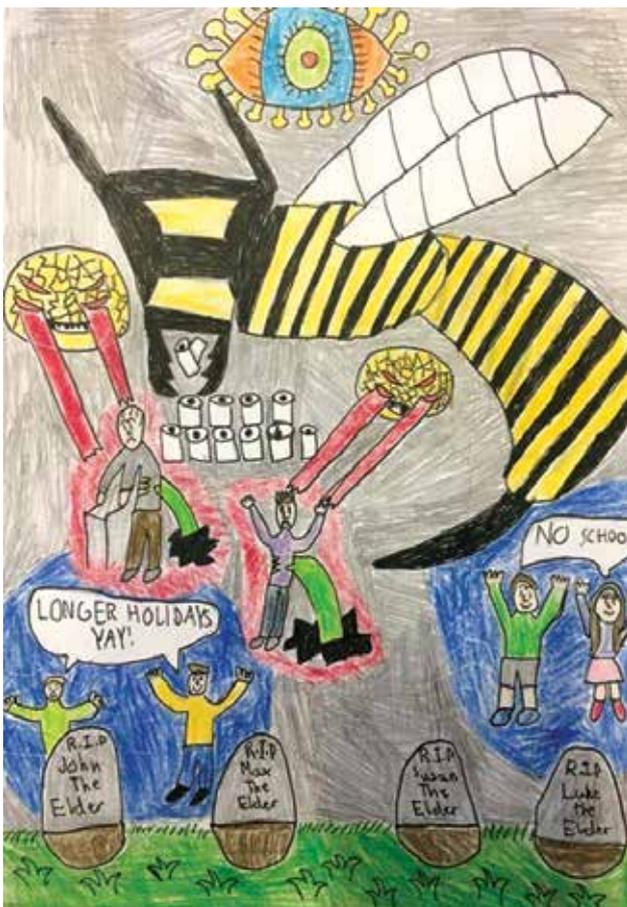
You and I don’t need to be Arnold, we don’t need to be strong, we don’t need to shout our lungs off when our team scores. We don’t need to be unemotional; we don’t need to have the grip strength equivalent to the jaws of a crocodile, we don’t need to be what other people want us to be.

All we need to be is happy. Whether it be by liking a hobby even if no one else does, talking in a specific way, pursuing a sport or activity. We’re all human at the end of the day, and we should all live how we want. ■

WATERFALLS

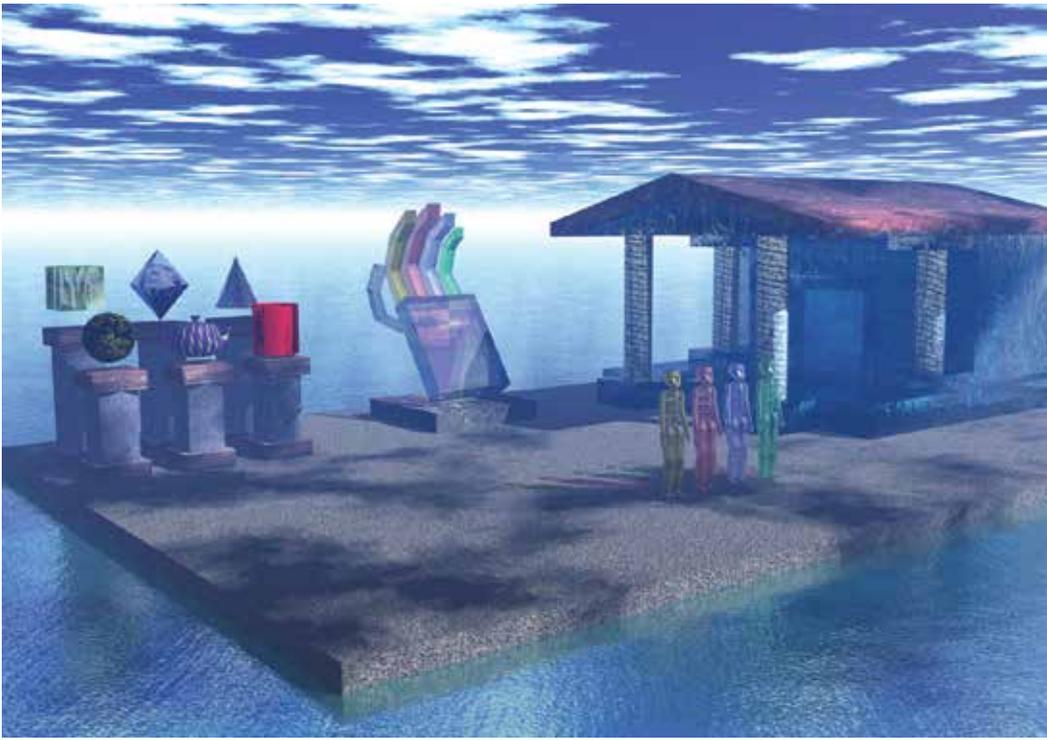
Nghia Dao · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Water slowly falls
Surrounded by animals
The best water source ■



Matthew Visentin
Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Pandemic



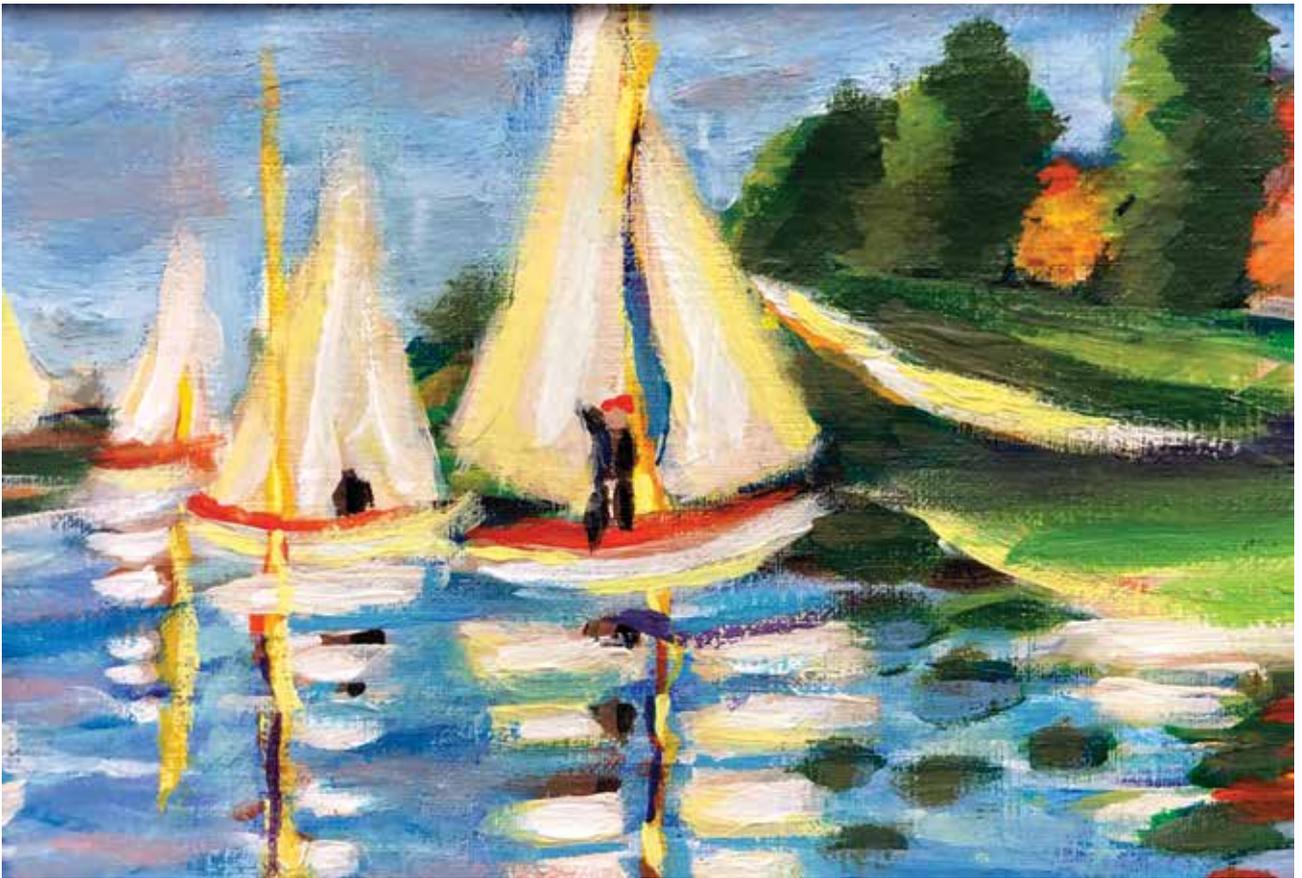
Ethan Oscini
Year 11 · Simonds Catholic College

Pandemic



Nati Teshome
Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

Thank You Heroes



Gemma Mullan
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Gemma Mullan
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Jordan Russ
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic pour



Hayley Fino
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Lachlan Serpell
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Digital mock-up



Kai Freeman
Year 12 · CRC Melton

Logo design



Harry Apostolopoulos
Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Life's Journey

The message that I have tried to convey through my artwork is respect. I respect the journey that my grandfather has had during his life, from coming from Greece to Australia in the 1960's, learning to adapt to life in a new country, making this country his home and; working as a law-abiding citizen of Australia. He has gone on to have his own family and grown old gracefully. I have chosen a winding road in my artwork to symbolise the many twists and turns of his life. The tall mountain ash trees show his strength along the way.



Harry Apostolopoulos
Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Standing Tall 'Mountain Ash Trees'

Respecting the landscape where these magnificent mountain ash trees grow.

(There is only 1% of Mountain Ash Forest in Victoria that hasn't been burnt and logged. These trees provide a natural habitat for a range of wildlife, including the critically endangered Leadbeater's Possum.)



Harry Apostolopoulos
Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Bursting Buds

The tree awakens from its dormant state from the cold winter, to produce stunning blossoms that will change to form small fruit for the birds and a new tree canopy for the coming months.



Rocky Gagliardi
Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Hands of Nature

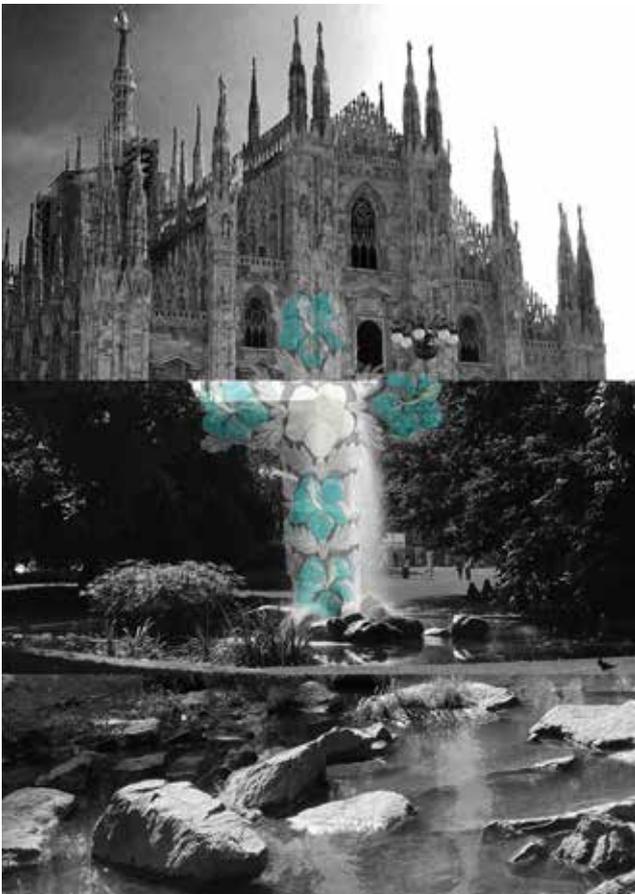
People often don't respect nature, and what it does for us. So this image captures the burden our hands have in taking care of it.



Phillip Deane
 Year 8 · Whitefriars College

House of Peace

This is a lino print of ‘*The Basílica de la Sagrada Família*’ in Barcelona. Through our respect and admiration of God, we want to house his peace in a beautiful place. Gaudi’s (Sagrada Família’s architect) respect for nature inspired him to build something beautiful for God and for all. Now more than ever, we need to find our respect for each other for the benefit of our physical, mental and spiritual well-being.



Samir Prasad
 Year 11 · Whitefriars College

Blossomed Faith

My theme was based on ‘Religion’ as a whole, I went through various inspirational stages by being inspired by nature as well as life in lock-down. I combined four components together to unveil beauty in black and white with; a glimpse of colour to symbolise the faith we find during times of darkness. The glimmer of light and colour on the cross reflects my hope throughout COVID-19. My photo is about looking at the bigger picture and how faith can bring comfort in challenging times.



Nicole Formaran
Year 11 · Lavalla Catholic College

Dear Bernie

Oil on canvas

I felt the desire to capture my sister likeness, to bring her warmth and wholesomeness to others.

REFLECTIVE WRITING POEM

Isaac Friend · Year 7 · Lavalla Catholic College

The year 2020 is going down in history.
The cause of COVID-19 seems to be a mystery
But that didn't stop us learning.
Even though our brains kept churning
And the teachers frustration kept burning.
We still beat Remote Learning.
And so we are back at school
With our motors almost out of fuel.
We can look back and smile
At that most interesting lifestyle.
But at last I must label
There are a few things for which I am grateful:
For spending more time with family,
Whose quirkiess was sometimes an anomaly.
For sleeping to the eve of the morning
Until schools presents came adawning.
For continuing to learn in a comfortable environment,
Even when young siblings became an irritant.
I give gratitude to all the teachers
And to our most devoted of leaders.
But of course there were downsides
Which seem to arise nationwide:
I've never been friends with technology,
Who's occurrence to me lies in mythology.
The second class quality of takeaway food,
Especially Indian whose curry tastes extremely crude!
The communication was at some times frustrating
The whole experience was widly exhilarating!
But in the end we all made it through.
And now after it all I say Thank you! ■



Siena Gendala
Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Sea Monster



Lily Ferrier
Year 4 · St James Catholic Primary School Brighton

Silhouette

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Bryce Gill · Year 5 · St Mary's Hampton

Today was great!! My owners came home early and took me for my daily walk and fed me extra early. I didn't know why they had arrived so early until tonight.

They were watching TV and something came up about this thing called Coronavirus. Everyone has to stay home, and as a dog, I was sooooo excited.

The next day I was woken up early by my owners. They came over to me and gave me a pat and a belly rub. It was so lovely, I never get that kind

of attention in the morning when they are busy, rushing around getting ready for work.

After a leisurely breakfast, my owners put me on a leash and took me for a walk. While we were in the park, we saw a person coughing, so I directed my owners away. It was my job to keep them safe.

When we got home, I was exhausted and ran straight for my water bowl. I'm not used to gallivanting around during the day. This was only Day One. I am looking forward to nap time. ■

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Jemma Manku · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

COVID-19 is just a germ,
But it has totally disrupted our whole school term!
Everything we have done has been online,
We've had to stay at home this whole time.

Not seeing my friends has made me so sad,
But some things at home are not so bad.
We have been on bike rides and lots of walks,
And I've kept in touch with friends on Facetime talks.

We've read books, played Uno, nerf guns and ping-pong,
The lockdown has seemed so very long.
The virus seems to be coming towards an end,
And I can't wait to see all of my friends!

We still need to remember to keep apart,
But soon we will all be able to have a fresh start. ■

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Alice Davies · Year 5 · St Mary's Hampton

Disgusting and revolting was the way that people on earth lived. Pollution created a murky world. Clouds were filled with yucky air. This day was like no other. Mother Nature needed revenge on the horrible people that lived on earth.

Mother Nature needed revenge, but she couldn't do it on her own, she needed assistance! She desperately demanded help from the Guardians of the Earth; Sun, Moon, Sky, Water, Fire, Air

and of course Earth. The protectors of Earth came as quickly as possible as they were also very concerned. They scurried inside going to a long wooden table where they had their most serious conversations.

Mother Nature confidently walked into the spotlessly clean meeting room. She started talking about revenge.

Big Revenge... ■

THE DAY THE WORLD CAUGHT A COLD

Amelie Sexton · Year 4 · St Mary's Hampton

The day the world caught a cold,
Everything was put on hold!
I was put in isolation,
So was all the rest of the Nation.
I wish I was on vacation,
Looking at the constellation with concentration,
Frustration...
To set the tone,
I'm all alone.
At home on the phone, chillin' in the zone,
With my pet gnome, giving the dog a bone.
We are in Vic,
I didn't want to get sick.
So I gave the virus a kick,
While watching a Flick and the clock was going
tick, tick, tick...
I am online,
Watching a mime, learning to rhyme,
At the same time, there was a crime,
Someone stole a dime.
In the sunshine,
It's been a Lifetime!!! ■

COLOUR SPECTRUM

Grace Keleher · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Life is rainbow, as a poet once said,
One colour of the rainbow is the colour red.
When I see orange, I think of the sun,
And summer days outside having fun,
There's no colour quite as mellow,
As my very favourite, the colour yellow.
Green is the grassiest colour I've seen,
It's crisp and fresh and smells so clean.
Blue is the sky, and the colour cyan,
It helps me remember exactly who I am.
P, U, R, P, L and E,
Is the most fashionable colour I think I can see.
Pink is the colour of the Kitten in The Masked Singer,
It's brighter than a theme park's lit up wave swinger.
One is dark, one is light,
Peas in a pod, black and white.
Every colour in the rainbow is valuable to me,
It tells a story about what I see! ■

BLUE

Josh Orłowski · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Blue is the colour of the ocean,
It makes me think of huge crashing waves,
It is the colour of the sky,
And gives us beautiful violets.
It brings the colour of rain,
It carries all my textas and pencils in my blue pencil case.
It holds the flowers in my mother's blue vase,
It helps me carry my school books each day.
Blue is a symbol of peace and quiet,
Blue tastes like my favourite berry.
Blue is my favourite colour! ■

ORANGE

Stella van der Riet · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Cut open an orange,
And look what you see.
Orange juicy, juice,
As nice as can be.
Orange is the colour of leaves when they fall,
And carrots that are really tall.
Orange is the colour of the setting sun,
When the day is well and truly done. ■

ORANGE

Jemma Manku · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Orange is the colour of the sun,
Orange is my second favourite colour.
Orange makes me really happy,
Orange makes me smile.
Orange is so bright,
Orange is the colour of my favourite fruit,
which is peaches.
I love orange because it's such a nice colour. ■

BLUE

Mason Seoud · Year 3 · St Mary's Hampton

Blue is the colour of the sea.
Blue is the colour of the beautiful sky.
Blue is the colour of my little brother's robe.
Blue is the colour of my school shirt and some blankets.
Blue is the colour of Tom's eyes. ■

PARK SPACE SHIP

Adam Sagiadellis · Year 6 · De La Salle College

One day I asked Mum if she could take me to the local park. She said that we could go after lunch. When lunch came and went I kept asking, when are we going to leave? Mum kept saying “soon, I’ve got to finish some things first”. Mum always said that because she was very busy. Finally, Mum told me to get ready because we were leaving in ten minutes. When we got into the car Mum said that we could only go for a couple of hours because we were going to visit my grandparents later on.

As we were driving to the park I could see a big circular black and white object in the sky above us. It looked like it was following us. When we arrived at the park I ran out of the car and straight to the big black spider web. As I started to climb the spider web, I looked up in the sky to see if the object that I saw from the car window was still there. At the top of the spider web I met this kid called Billy. We started to look at the sky together and wondered what that object was. All of a sudden, we could see it coming closer and closer. Then we heard a loud crash! After hearing that sound many of the little kids sprinted to their parents in tears.

Billy and I wanted to see what this strange flying object was. So, we ran over to the object and saw a sign saying Mars Bar spaceship. All of a sudden, a door opened and three green, creepy crawly five-eyed, two-nosed aliens with five antennae came crawling out. Billy and I looked at each other and started to laugh. The aliens looked at each other and wondered why we looked so different to them.

One of them then opened his mouth and asked us what our names were and why we were laughing. We couldn’t believe what we just heard! The aliens were speaking English. We said our names were Billy and Jimmy. They then laughed at us and told us that they were here for a secret mission. We wanted to ask more questions but they were crawling closer and closer to us and we were getting scared.

I looked at Billy and he looked back at me. We could both tell that each of us was getting a little bit scared. All of a sudden Billy and I screamed and sprinted back to our Mums. We kept looking back and could see that the aliens were following us. When we reached our Mums, we gave them a big hug and asked if we could go home as soon as possible as there were aliens in the park. Our Mums grabbed us and ran to the car before the aliens could catch us.

We were running to the car when suddenly there was a problem! Mum had left her keys on the park bench. Mum told Billy’s Mum to take me to her house and look after me. When we got back to Billy’s we started to play games around the house. As we were playing, Billy’s Mum said that there was a knock on the door. It was my Mum.

Billy’s Mum invited my Mum in for a coffee. Mum said that she would love one as it had been a hectic day. Billy and I wanted to know if the aliens were still at the park. We asked Mum, and she wasn’t sure. We begged our Mums to go back to the park. They finally agreed but they wanted to finish their coffee first. And because this was during the pandemic, we all had to wear our masks.

Billy and I were both excited and scared as we drove back to the park as we didn’t know what to expect. As soon as we reached the park we jumped out of the car and bolted to where the spaceship was. The aliens saw us running towards them and something weird happened.

I’m sure I heard them scream, that is if an alien can scream! They took off before we got there.

Our Mums said that it must have been the masks that scared them away! We still wonder what they would have done had we reached them that day. ■

TO EARN RESPECT

Ben Scheloske · Year 8 · De La Salle College

There was once a boy named Fred. Fred was fifteen and was a very clever boy who would always get good marks. He lived in a small house near a train station. To get to school every day he would take the train on his own.

On one very special day he was told that he and other students in his year level were allowed to run for class captain. After his day at school he caught the train back home, rushed over to his room and grabbed a pencil and paper. He started to write his class captain speech. He sat at the desk in his bedroom for over three hours writing the speech. At around seven o'clock his parents called him down for dinner and asked Fred about his day. Fred said that he was ecstatic about the fact that he could run for class captain. His parents were very happy and proud that he was so passionate.

Once Fred finished his dinner he put away his dirty dishes and ran back upstairs to continue writing his speech. He realised that although it was a very honest speech it didn't have the wow factor that his classmates would be looking for. So he started embellishing, adding in small untruths about himself like "I would be a great captain for our class, because I have been the captain of my sporting club for 5 years."

This wasn't true at all. In reality, he would always be on the bench because he'd skip training to play videogames. He thought to himself; if he should be lying and exaggerating this much, then he thought "why not? If it's what I've got to do to get the votes, then I'll do it". So he did.

A few more days went by and all he could talk about with his friends was the class captain elections.

Finally it was the day; the day where he would read out his speech in front of everyone. As he walked up on to the stage, his legs were trembling and his hands were shaking. When he got up to the stage and got in line to read his speech, voices started speaking to him: "don't lie. Tell them who you really are". Fred just ignored the voices. He read his speech out in front of everyone with great confidence. Everyone was amazed. He knew he nailed it. Then it came to the voting. Fred was almost certain he had won.

After the speech, at recess and lunch, everyone was telling him how much they liked his speech and that they voted for him. This made Fred so happy. That night he went home and told his parents and they were really happy for him. When he went to bed those same voices were in his mind again but this time they were saying "They may respect you now, but when they find out who you are they will lose all respect". He just brushed it off and fell asleep.

The next morning, Fred woke up ready to go to school to hear the Principal announce his name at assembly and give him his badge. Once he arrived at school he went straight to the assembly and as he'd expected, he won! Fred was so happy, and all of a sudden at recess, lots of students started hanging around him and he had his first taste of popularity.

When he got home later that night he told his parents and they were very happy for him. He finished his dinner, went upstairs and played some video games with his new friends instead of going to training. When he went to bed, he heard the voices again saying "soon they'll know you lied" over and over again. This time Fred was slightly worried because he was hearing these voices a lot. But he thought, whatever, now that he was captain it didn't matter anymore. Or so he thought.

The next morning was a Saturday and Fred had a soccer game, as usual he was sitting on the bench because he had skipped training. His team won but there was one problem, a girl from school who was walking her dog at the park saw Fred sitting on the bench. She must have realised that the captain of 5 years would definitely not be on the bench. She told all her friends that Fred was a liar. Word got around quickly at Fred's school. Other students mentioned that parts of his speech were flat out lies but hadn't thought to say anything before. Fred had no idea this was happening, until the next Monday.

When Fred turned up at school, all the students looked at him disgustedly, walked away when he tried to say hello and generally ignored him. He started to feel really uncomfortable and anxious. What had happened? One student however, walked straight up to him and asked, "Why were you on the bench, huh?" Fred's eyes opened wide as the realisation that the whole school found out about his lies hit him in the face like a brick. He walked to class alone, no one wanted to be near him, not even the kids who were his friends before the speech. At recess there was an announcement on the loudspeaker asking Fred to report to the Principal's office. He knew it was to return his badge. For the rest of the day Fred was alone. Everyone had lost all respect for him because he didn't respect them enough to be honest.

He knew when he got home he was in for it. His parents sat him down and told him how disappointed they were. When they were finished, they sent him to his room. When he went to bed that night he heard the voices say "We told you, but you didn't listen." But this time Fred listened. It was going to take a long time before he'd earn back everyone's respect. Fred learnt the hard way that to be respected, you have to be honest. ■

MOTHER'S WISHES

Vincent Nguyen · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

I woke up to the sound of a crow cawing in front of the window. I glanced at the old, wrinkly calendar: it was the 8th of March, 1923. Immediately, I knew this was unusual. By this time my mother would have woken up and been washing the clothes or sweeping the planks. Concerned, I walked to my mother's room and there lay a horrific sight. She was on the ground like a lifeless husk.

"Mother! Can you hear me?!" I yelled, sprinting towards her.

I pressed my hand to the side of her neck. I could feel a faint pulse. My mother isn't usually this sick. She occasionally might get a little cold or a small cough! *This exact same thing happened to her ten years ago*, I thought to myself. I quickly laid her in the bed and waited until she woke up again. After overcoming the heart-pounding minutes of stress, I saw that her eyes were open.

"I'm sorry for putting you through all of this trouble, Jonathan," she said as she gasped and started coughing.

"Mother, you've been stressing yourself out too much for the past few days," I replied.

Suddenly, I remembered the pills she used to keep her illness under control. I quickly rushed to the cabinet and searched for the tablets, but quickly realised that there were no more. Swiftly, I put the container in my pocket.

"I'll go and get some more medicine, mother! I'll be back in an hour, so just stay put!" I shouted as I rushed out of the door.

I rushed to the market and went to the man who I usually bought medicine from. I showed him the container and he gave me his last box of discounted overdue medicine. He stuck out his hand as if he wanted some form of payment, and reality hits me like a truck. I didn't have enough money.

"Please sir! My mum is extremely sick, and I can't afford the medicine, so could you please take pity on me please?"

"I'm sorry kid, but the business has been rough lately, so no can do," he replies with sorrow in his eyes.

"*I have no other choice*" I said in my head.

I snatched the medicine and ran away as I heard the man's shouting slowly fading away. While running, I bumped into three middle-aged men.

"I'm sorry!"

I continue running until one of the men grabs me by the collar of my shirt and yells:

"You better apologise right to my face you maggot, or else you will regret ever bumping into me!"

He noticed the medicine clutched in my hand and grabs it off me.

"Hey! I need that for my mum!" I shout.

"Too bad, 'cause it's gone now."

He opens the container and throws the tablets into a nearby river. I see the tablets slowly fizz out in the river. Suddenly, I feel a sharp pain in my stomach and pass out. Moments later, I regained my consciousness and found the open container by my side. It was well over an hour and I couldn't even get medicine for mother. Slowly, I got up and headed home.

I opened the door to my mould-ridden home. Frantically, I rushed to my mother's room only to find her in an even worse condition than when I left her.

"Mother! Hang in there!" I exclaim.

She opened her mouth to say something, but I could only hear the air come from her mouth. I managed to figure out she was saying by looking at her mouth.

"I love you, Jonathan."

Soon after, her skin became pale and her body became slack. I nodded silently as I watched her eyes slowly shut, trying to not cry, but I could not prevent the tears from overflowing from my eyelids. My life was never the same.

Ten years after my departure from home, I am now a wealthy man. I struck gold in the oil industry after finding a huge cavern beneath the ground almost filled to the brim with petroleum. Almost every single bank in this country is under my name.

Suddenly, a tall, black-haired man walks in my office.

"You have three middle-aged men loitering at your door saying they want to come in."

"Let them in," I respond calmly.

Inside my office, the men beg for money because they were in severe debt. Immediately, I realise that these are the same three men and my mind immediately recalls to when they made my mother die.

"*This is it,*" I said to myself "*Now is the time to get revenge on these horrible men. What shall I do?*"

Put them in debt for their entire lives? Maybe bribe the police to sentence these men to jail?"

The flame of anger within me, reignited but was extinguished by the thoughts of my mother. No, I mustn't, my mother would never forgive me if I did this to someone. I thought nothing about it and helped them sign a loan agreement with me. This event was in the past. There was no reason to bring it out now. I had to respect my mother's wishes. ■



Monicka Floresca
*Year 7 · Catholic Regional
College St Albans*

Eye of the Storm

Acrylic on Canvas Paper

Cold inside surrounded
by warmth.

THE TALE OF TWO GREAT SPIRITUAL BROTHERS

Tommy Flasz · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

(12/5/1676 Sengoku Period)

Dusk settled on the great Shimada castle. ‘The Wolf’ stood ready to attack it. An assassin with a heart made of ice ran towards him. The Wolf incapacitated the assassin with one shot of his great wolf bow. A second assassin was dispatched with brandished steel. A third, in a surge of panic, fled, and to his misfortune hit an ancient gold bell knocking him out.

The Wolf swiftly ran inside the castle to the temple. He was in enemy territory; the lands of the Tokushima shogun. The Wolf looked down at his sword. Its blue handle glowed with the image and protection of the wolf symbol. He had once used this same sword to kill his brother Danjiro in one swift strike.

The Wolf had come to the temple to pay respect to the spirits and ask for guidance. The spirits asked him.

“Oh, wolf lord. Why are you so distraught?”

The wolf replied to the spirits “Seeking power I killed my brother, without him I am nothing”

“You have inflicted wounds upon yourself, now you must heal,” they replied.

At that moment, The Wolf sensed an assassin holding a sharp katana. The wolf mumbled under his breath

“You are not the first assassin sent to kill me and you won’t be the last!”

The stranger in the darkness replied, “You are bold to come to Shimada castle, the den of your enemies.”

The Wolf fired an arrow at the assassin but the assassin dodged it. Frustrated with himself, he shot three more arrows but all missed. The unknown assassin hid unseen.

The Wolf, infused with rage, jumped from his place and fired again, directly at the voice of the assassin. He missed again. The incredible reaction time of this

assassin amazed him. Suddenly The Wolf saw a flash sprint outside to a balcony and he followed him.

The cool crisp wind blew over the balcony and cherry blossoms filled the landscape. The Wolf swiftly sought the strange assassin. The silhouette of the assassin escaped him, but he knew he was there. Suddenly, he saw the flash of a katana sword out of the corner of his eye. He fired another arrow but the assassin sliced the arrow in half. The Wolf was now out of arrows and was forced to battle in hand to hand combat.

The assassin enemy was now in full sight. His fast reflexes took The Wolf by surprise. Kicks rained down on him and he was forced to the edge of the balcony. A thirty metre fall off the balcony beckoned, deep into the sakuras below. The Wolf summoned the power of the wolf spirit which gave great strength and speed. With brute strength and quick reflexes, he grabbed the assassin, choking him.

“ōkami yo waga teki o kurae!!!!”

The Wolf looked into the eyes of the assassin. He had seen these eyes before. They were the eyes of his dead brother. How could this be? In awe he said the name of his fallen brother,

“Danjiro?!”

Danjiro looked back at him with solemn eyes.

“I have accepted what I am and now you must respect yourself.”

The respect in Danjiro’s voice surprised The Wolf. His once fallen brother, the brother he had killed was now a spirit in front of his eyes. He looked at Danjiro and whispered... “I admired and aprecated you, but I wanted power. Please brother, forgive this lonely soul.”

Danjiro’s spirit replied. “I have forgiven you – I go now to rest. Respect has been restored.”

In the blink of an eye Danjiro’s spirit faded away The Wolf was left alone with the Cherry Blossoms blowing in the wind below. ■



Nadeen Franso
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Fruits of Life – Apples

Acrylic on Canvas



Ryan Tran
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Fruits of Life – Pear

Acrylic on Canvas



Leo Thinh
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Fruits of Life – Banana

Acrylic on Canvas



Toan Truong
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

Fruits of Life – Cherry

Acrylic on Canvas

BEYOND APPEARANCE

Thomas Le · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College St Albans

The school gates looked particularly looming as Steven made his way to the front entrance of his High school. The idea of his afternoon maths assessment was eating away at him. It was the first time Steven hadn't studied for a test, and it was too late to ask for an extension.

As he made his way to his locker he was bombarded by a crowd of people wanting his attention. He was always the one who could make someone's day, however, his usual spark was missing that morning. Steven reached his locker and loaded his school bag inside. As he did this, a note fell to the floor.

*Hi darling,
Don't be too hard on yourself today,
Grandma is looking down on you and
Wants you to be happy,
Love mum.*

He folded up the note and put it into his shirt pocket, close to his heart. He made his way to the classroom, his feet moving faster than his body would allow. As he set foot in the classroom he was welcomed by his teacher with the test in her hands.

With a shaky extension of his hand, he took the paper. More and more students started to shuffle in, there were nods and greetings, small talk and laughter. Then someone walked in, who Steven didn't really recognise. Others were already snickering and whispering about the girl with "the oddly shaped hairstyle". The teacher called the roll. When she uttered "Lucy", Steven was surprised that the student was *the Lucy* he had attended primary school with. This same Lucy had moved into a different friendship group and her behaviours began to change when they started High school.

Lucy had started acting 'different'. Steven couldn't understand why it was affecting him so much. Was it the memory that they had once been friends and now Lucy barely spoke to him? Or, was it the fact that she could be so completely herself and not worry?

That evening, Steven arrived home stressed and out of energy. He unlocked the door and was struck by an altar holding his Grandmother's photo. Stevens' phone began to buzz within his pocket. As a distraction from his feelings, he retrieved the phone and began to read the barrage of messages appearing in a group chat. It was a group chat aimed to tease and destroy Lucy for her hairstyle. Insults in the chat were like shots being fired on a battlefield. Steven still had lingering thoughts of

his grandmother in his mind, and his fingers took on a mind of their own. He could feel the energy bubbling, like lava in his body.

Lucy, it's so obvious that you're trying to change yourself into anyone but YOU. If I was in your position, I would too. That haircut makes you look like your dad, we all know what you are. You don't need to cut your hair like that to make it even more obvious.

As soon as these words left Steven's mind, he immediately turned off his phone. He couldn't bear to witness any replies. Steven kept the phone in his pocket all night and spent the rest of the evening commemorating his Grandmother's death.

Steven suffered through a restless sleep. The tears of his mother had provided a melancholy soundtrack throughout the night. He awoke, turned on his phone and readied himself for school. As soon as the phone came to life, so did the succession of notifications like electric bolts on the screen.

Steven picked up his phone, and besides all of the messages that had appeared in the group chat, it was the small, lit up, private message from Lucy herself that was waiting in his inbox.

Dear Steven...

Even her use of 'dear' almost brought the tension up out of his stomach. He thought he might throw up.

I wanted to write this message because I thought you should know that I'm not upset with what you said. Surprised, yes. But not upset. We were friends in primary school when your grandmother died. I know you were angry yesterday. I guess I was an easy target. My dad left home... you said he would. And now he's gone, mum has a new guy. He's not nice Steven...let me leave it at that. Sometimes I look in the mirror and don't like what I see. So I needed to change. See something different. No need to reply to this. Just wanted you to know.

Steven's hands started to tremble, he felt drenched in her honesty. He felt a combination of anger at himself and sadness for her. Steven sat on his bed and started to write.

*Dear Lucy,
I'm sorry.
You've taught me a life lesson,
To respond to hate with honesty and care,
and to look beyond appearances.
Thanks for writing to me,
I respect you so much for what you've done. ■*



Year 7 Avoca
Catholic Regional College St Albans

Beautiful Butterflies

Pen on Paper

Shades and shades of beauty in butterflies.

MAGIC 1490

Rose Pearson · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

Every night, without fail, I would leave the radio on, hoping to hear the station that didn't exist. Some nights the signal was clear, and unearthly melodies flooded my apartment and escaped out onto the street. Other nights, the crackle of static prevailed and the soft hum of music was almost inaudible. Worse than the nights of static were the ones of silence.

Those nights I was deaf and I would panic, anxious to hear again. I was lost in an unfamiliar landscape, blind without the music to guide me.

I would lay awake through the night waiting, in a stifling stillness, suffocating with the soundlessness. Others, unburdened by the knowledge of such wonder, might have described the quiet as tranquil. But I became panicked with the emptiness. The worry that it might be lost forever was all encompassing; the fear grew tighter and tighter until I forgot how to live apart from the radio and clutched it to my ear in desperation, an alien appendage that became fused to my skull. The relief I felt when the opening tune sounded was indescribable. My tensed muscles would relax and I would be properly alive again. Without it, I was merely a shell of my former self, a fraction of the person I could be. Only when the music played could I truly be present.

One week, it simply ceased to exist.

I pined for the jingling tune of introduction, the prerecorded message that played invariably, a distinctive radio voice, reminiscent of a 1950s presenter: 'Magic 1490,' he would say, a short pause, the length of which I had memorised. 'The height of relaxation!' he would then proclaim.

Desperation became anger, my attitude mirroring the weather outside. I was a storm, ready to rage at people who had done nothing to warrant it. There was lightning inside of me, aching to escape in the form of cruel words and spitefulness. My shouts of rage were thunder booming and when this gave way to tears it was a relentless rain, ready to destroy anyone attempting to comfort me.

And I made it through this time, the very worst of it, with the discovery of a poster on a street corner. A single A4 piece of paper, weathered and beaten, barely noticeable amidst all the garage sale advertisements, the charity sausage sizzle notices and announcements of the spring school fates.

Through this poster I found others like myself, aware that they too had lost something they should never have laid claim to, seeking answers that no one could give. It was enough to tide me through, simply being assured that it was real rather than the product of a dream.

One night it happens. A song on the regular station ends and the presenter from Magic 1490 speaks up. He begins to whisper numbers. Coordinates I realise, and I grab a pen and paper. I write them down, exhilarated with this new lead. I'm almost myself again.

I get on the bus and leave the city behind. I'm taking a risk, sure. But I don't need to make arrangements. Nobody will miss me, save for a few plants and perhaps my landlord.

I travel through the crowded city streets, to less crowded suburbs. The suburbs fade out to lively country towns. Thriving towns turn to dead, abandoned ones. It is dark when the bus finally slows.

'Last stop!' the driver calls. I step off, swaying, unsure of how to walk about on solid ground. The desert surrounds me, cold and bare. It is empty, save for a small tin shack.

I walk towards the shack and the door swings open. A pair of headphones sit by an empty chair. I sit down and put on the headphones. They fit perfectly.

I twist the knob and music fills my ears. It is clearer and more beautiful than ever before. The track ends.

'Magic 1490,' I say.

A brief pause. 'The height of relaxation!' ■



Olivia Hough
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

#Stayhome

Political Poster – Gouache

For my units 3-4 Studio Arts study, I wanted to make a political poster surrounding the ever so prevalent political/social movement #Stayhome in regards to COVID-19. Although topical in Australia, the anti-lockdown protests in the United States from Michigan to Arizona made headlines around the world as workers begged to open the economy but in turn, putting many lives in danger as this would facilitate a further spread of the virus in a country already plagued with tragedy. In hopes to shock the protestors, nurses all over the country took part in counter protests to highlight the grave danger this would put the public in, but also the overwhelming stress more COVID-19 cases would add to the United States Healthcare system. So in response to the powerful stories and photos taken at the counter protests, I decided to paint Lauren Leander, Arizonian nurse who came face to face with an anti-lockdown protestor in a powerful stance in the support of #Stayhome to prevent the further spread of COVID-19.



Mason Emery
Year 9 · Whitefriars College

Kaleidoscope of Respect

The leaves are reflected from the centre point and represent how our actions can be reflected through the environment. If we want our world to be lush and green we have to embrace sustainable living and lower our carbon footprint.



Nathan North-Coombes
Year 9 · Whitefriars College

Standout

This photo shows a bright flower standing out amongst the other dull plants. It represents how we should respect people with differences who may stand out from what we consider to be normal. We are all equal and should therefore show respect for one another.



Owen Harbor
Year 11 · Whitefriars College

The Purple Dimension

For my artwork I focused on the reflective nature of 'Water' and how water can mirror the beauty of nature. The reflective quality of water can create harmony within a landscape, giving the observer a second lens to look through. I found that the purple flowers gave the photograph a focal point and created balance throughout.



Patrick Bulloch
Year 10 · Whitefriars College

Shine



Brooke Condron
Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

The Time is Now

The figure stands and watches the fall of the world as we know it. Millions of people are dying, thousands of species of animals will never walk this earth again and the environment can no longer sustain our selfish ways. The only way that this dreadful fate can be halted is if we stop and make serious changes in the way we live and the way we respect our environment. Unlike the figure, I will not stand by and do nothing while the future of our earth is being destroyed for generations to come, will you?



Katrina Caliguiran
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Just Be

Sometimes people get so caught up in the bits and pieces of life that they begin to feel that it overwhelms them. This artwork is about allowing yourself to find your way out of all those things that dominate your life and in doing so allow yourself to just be.

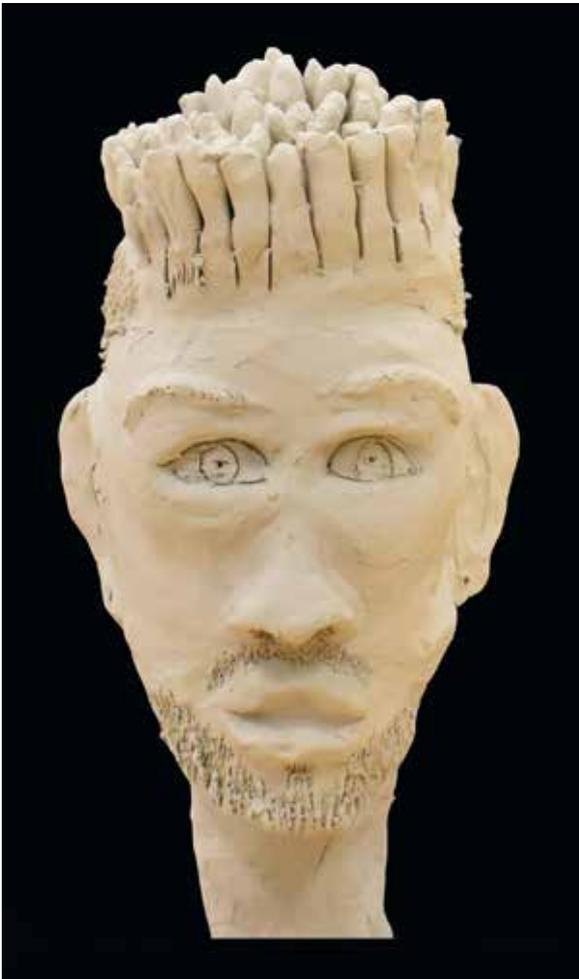


Lilly Frigo

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Creating

My imagination allows me to create images of other people. When coming up with my idea I drew upon the features that makes the person distinct.



Tomas Bosevski

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Difference

We are called to accept and respect everyone. We know that each of us have different opinions, aspirations, likes and dislikes and we need to learn how to celebrate the uniqueness of all people. Respect is at the very core of what we need to do to create harmony between the difference.



Liljana Fedcesen

Year 10 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Black Lives Matter

Living in the 21st century, anyone in the right mind would think that racism would be a thing of the past, but how wrong we are. People of colour, races and religions are constantly fighting daily, tirelessly, just for basic human rights, and most still cannot manage to achieve just that. This piece represents solidarity and understanding that Black Lives Matter. To be subjected to hate, prejudice and death based solely on skin colour is ridiculous and unimaginable, and it is about time that change takes place. Better late than never.



Toby Boorman

Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

The Visionary

The artwork is about seeing things in a better perspective and seeing the good and not the bad in what we think.



Danijela Dolic
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

My World

As I grow, I begin to see my world differently. As a child my family was my world but as I get older and venture outside of the home my world changes. I come to appreciate and value the impact my changing world has on me.



Jackson Cottle
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Learning From The Past

Sometimes we can create an image and although it is about today it reminds us of our past history. We can learn from the past to help shape our future in a way that draws upon all that is good.



Alessi Fernando
Year 12 · Star of the Sea College

This crazy year

In a series of Zoom portraits, I aimed to communicate the importance of staying connected while staying apart in isolation. Through this piece, I wanted to capture the variety of emotions everyone has felt this year through layering images to explore the feelings within personal experience. I also chose to complete these portraits using my friends as the subjects, as they are the people who truly helped me get through this year. I cannot thank them enough for helping me through a crazy year.



Art Ministry Class Collaboration
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Stations of the Cross – Love



Art Ministry Class Collaboration
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Stations of the Cross – Sacrifice

RESPECT

Gurshan Singh · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

“**R**espect is a two-way street if you want to get it you've got to give it”. Respect is a skill which is significantly important for others and yourself. Respect is when you admire something or someone or that you accept them for what/who they are. Respect is something you need to give first when you meet someone or when you're touching an object you must be treating it with dignity. Respect is shown truly from the heart, you should be giving respect to someone or something because it helps you feel safe and allows you to express yourself. It is most importantly useful in life and relationships.

One day, an old man was having a stroll in the forest when he suddenly saw a little cat stuck in a hole. The poor animal was struggling to get out. So, he gave him his hand to let the cat go free. You see the lesson you get out of this story is just so inspiring this is what you do need to do, respect people, places and things everybody deserves respect and dignity. Respect is all about loving, caring, life, relationships, friendships, happiness and dignity

Furthermore, to show respect, you must listen, respect their ideas and disagree with them, politely give them feedback, and be an active listener. Next is to serve, you need to stop being selfish and make a step by serving food, helping those in need or seeking salvation. Furthermore, we have to be kind to others. There's no need for you to be in a bad mood. You need to adapt to the environment to get a sense of nature, the natural air so you can be positive. Last but not least is to be thankful you should be happy with what you have. It's important to learn manners and say thank you when you're receiving an offering or a compliment as they are something you need to say thank you to first.

Moreover, you will get a lot out of respect. The effect you will have is that it will make you feel safer around people, you will have a right to express yourself with others and maintain a good life balance. You might have some health or mental problems showing respect will help reduce stress and improve your knowledge sharing. I'm telling you respect will make your life better and you can't beg for the respect you must earn and offer respect.

Conclusively you must show and offer respect, do it for yourself and others, offer it truly from the heart, show it always, let you and others express yourselves. You respect others and others will respect you. ■

RESPECT

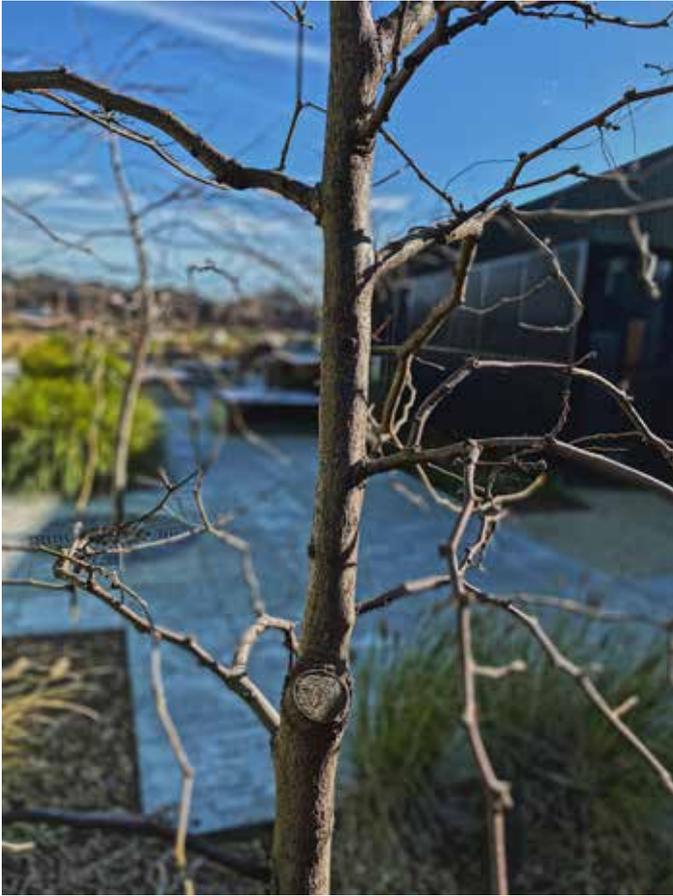
Hannah Williams · Year 7 · St. Peter's College

Reminder not to bully
Eager to help people
Stop being disrespectful
Protective of friends
Easy-going with people
Calibre to corporate
Trying their best to accomplish ■



Dak Papiti
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

Rising Star



Dhwang Yomum
Year 10 · St. Peter's College



Dominic Rode
Year 10 · St. Peter's College

In Japanese culture, Spring is the most important season of the year as it symbolizes new beginnings. During the lockdown, spring is a season we can all look forward to, like a light in the darkness. Japanese society is known for being built around respect for those who are older which is known as the 'Senpai, Kohai' system. The cranes among the cherry blossoms are a symbolism of both real-life circumstances (lockdown) and Respect (through Japanese culture).



Khoi Nguyen
Year 11 · CBC St Kilda



Kai Lui
Year 12 · CBC St Kilda

SAME EVERY DAY

Alexander Cannard · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

Every day we find ourselves in the same room,
Working on a laptop or talking to people on
zoom,
At any time, it has never been like this,
Sometimes you look at yourself staring into the
abyss.
To get out once a day to the shops,
And shoot a few shots,
Cannot be good for you or what you do,
Now more than ever we have to,
Call people and have a laugh and a talk,

Because people might want to hear a Knock Knock.
Have a clean out, watch some old movies,
Just need to make sure you are still moving,
Play a board game with some of your mates,
It may be online, but you might be living in
separate states.
So, all I am saying is have some fun, do something
nice,
And maybe if you like it, do it twice.
Just don't make things the same every day,
Because that is the one and only way of staying ok. ■

LOCKDOWN POEM

Joel Farrar · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

We all started out fully stressing,
soon more time for hairdressing.
Some people bought more puzzles,
others bought new dogs and needed some muzzles.
Everyone stayed in their house,
and spent more time with their spouse.
Some of them needed a new hobby,

with lots of space in their lobby.
Some chose woodwork,
to stop stressing their network.
Some chose to bake bread,
others wanted to stay at their farmstead.
Eventually we won't be isolated,
until then, some will stay frustrated. ■

AS WE RECOIL

Campbell Lavender · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

The flowers blooming, the world glooming.
As we recoil the world renews.
As we cry, brightness comes back to the sky.
As we recoil the world renews.
As we distance from each other, the World
begins not to suffer.
As we recoil the world renews.
As we shed tears for those who are sick, the
world grows very quick.
As we recoil the world renews. ■

UNTITLED

Nicholas Cook · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

One day it came along,
we were told it could stay a week a month or
even yearlong.
But now it's a pandemic,
and it's made people sick.
Still not is all bad not is all sad,
some people are still mad.
Yet communities have come together as one,
but I say the new era has begun.
This pandemic is an eyeopener,
and still it may come by as a blur.
But I say stay inside,
so you won't meet your demise. ■

THE LOCKDOWN

Nicholas Spijker · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

TV saying coronavirus over and over.
Nearly no one in the streets,
No one on public transport,
People wearing face masks and gloves,
Everyone is bored and miserable,
Walking away from each other. ■

CORONA!

Sebastien Ulehla · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

Chaos – people frantically buying toilet paper,
pasta and eggs like they are preparing for
the apocalypse
Outrage – so many rules what can we do?
Ridiculous – getting fined for a driving lesson
Oh my God! We could be like this for years!
Netflix – tons of people are hunkering down
with their laptop and doona and renewing
their Netflix subscription
Aaaaaahhhhhh – what a story to tell for
generations to come. ■

IN 2020 WE HIT THE HARD LIFE

Marco Canale · Year 7 · CBC St Kilda

We had a world it has made us live
It has made us love
It has made us think
We have carried for our world
But we have lost our world
We have strengthened our world
But our world has been hit
On came smoke, loss of green more of man
Loss of animals more of landfill
All started when 2020 made the virus
Mankind turned to each other
Leaders were making bleeders
Land was drying out
House was filled
Nothing was allowed on the streets
2020 is making us think
Maybe it's time to open our eyes and blink
It's here now there is no turning back
And maybe when this is over we will have
some flashbacks
But this will always explain that people can live
in different ways
Home schooling for kids making the perfect
memory
Because in 2020 sitting at home making more
hobbies and doing what you love to stay safe
Is what happened to humans all around the
world in 2020 ■

RESPECT

Johnah Tsouglis · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

Respect is love and love is kind,
if you open up your hearts you'll be surprised
by what you can find.

A simple act of kindness or words of prayer
can show others how much you really care,

A smile or laugh can wholeheartedly be fun
and leave people feeling enlightened when the
moment is done.

When on a dull day you give them a ring
and next second you know you're the happiest
thing.

When in a dying world they are the ones you
love best,
and for your family and friends you feel very
blessed.

In times of struggle
they are close by to snuggle.

Family and friends are our favourite guests
but morals are what we truly love best.

To treat others with dignity and respect
imprints on everyone a happy effect.

To be accepting good karma is received,
that is why we support all in need.

Being yourself is who we need to be.

Love and smiles are undoubtedly the cure
for all the evil which is so impure.

Together we are the strongest stand,
when we stand beside each other hand in hand.

Our lives are a song,
and we need to learn the lyrics for others to
sing along.

The universe will do its wonders,
but we must help to limit our blunders.

To live in harmony in days out in the sun,
imagine life like that, it could be so fun,

Healing our wounds and beginning fresh,
treat people the same not by the colour of their
flesh.

To treat all coequal,
no race left unequal.

To hear proud voices so humble,
before they start to crumble.

And above all let God hear us out on our brand
new paths,

Allow the universe to be the world we wish to
become
but we aren't the only ones who must change, we
need everyone.

We contain stardust within us which God also
contains,
so when the time comes he'll lead us on our way.

He is there for us and our families,
in his safe hands we know what to do.

Follow his teachings we know he is right,
and fight to be our best selves with all of our
might.

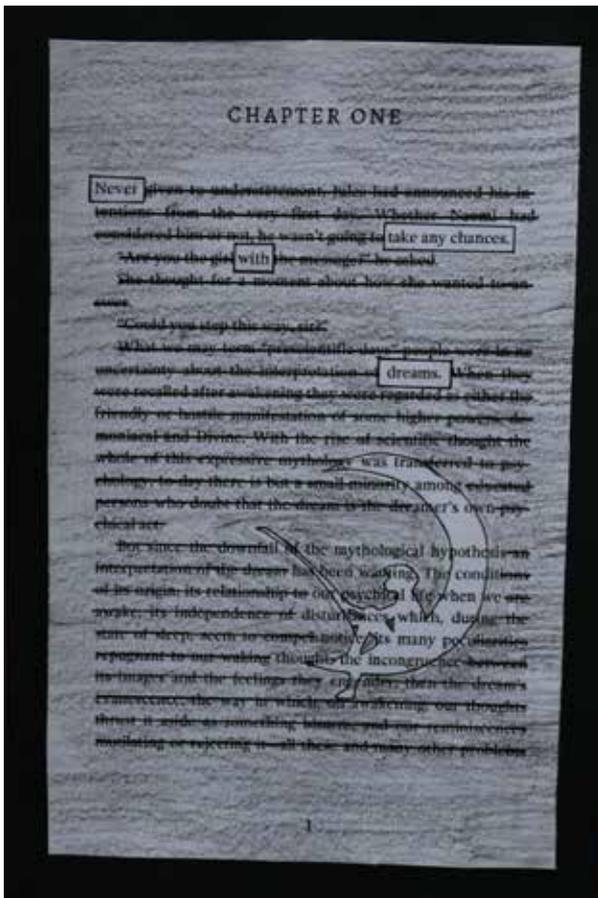
Help to abolish evil and heal the times where
we've had no chance,
and to end all wars with ourselves will open a
door to another chance.

Admire and continue to love family and friends,
and live life to the fullest before it ends.

To enjoy life with fulfilment and generosity
is the key to destroying any of life's monstrosity.

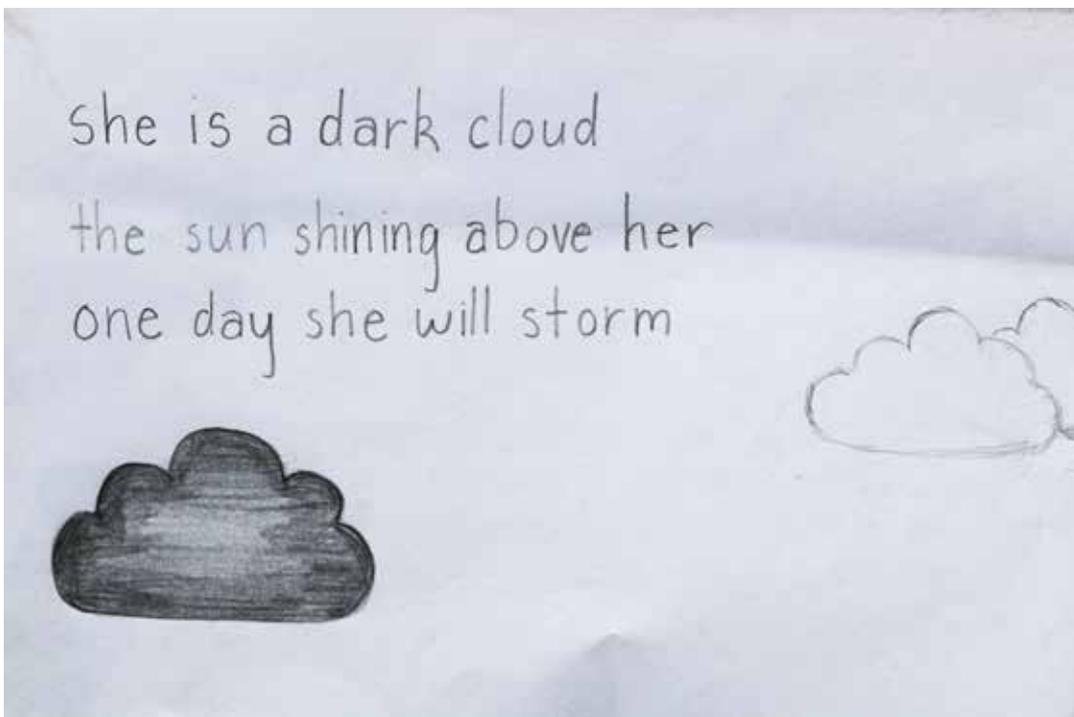
But overall you must Remember,
the following teaching will burn in your heart like
an ember,

Be you and do what is right for a world where
the heart of God is the world in which you will
thrive! ■



Kiera Donald
Year 9 · John Paul College

Dreams



Paige Wagenaar
Year 9 · John Paul College

Storm Ahead

CATCH TELLER CROW

Sarah Verberne · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

I lived in the now, leaving behind the things that weighed me down the way butterflies left their caterpillar selves.

Everything was clearer, the sun piercing through the clouds, the minuscule droplets hanging on to the strands of grass, even the winds song was like nothing that has ever been heard before. I wanted to fly, soar above the ground, become one with the wind and sky. But still, my anchor stood, his silhouette painted upon the portrait of the forest, his eyes haunted with what was discovered and what was to come.

Could I leave him with his grief still so present, could I take myself away from the only source of colour I have had in years? But yet I know, deep down, that I need to soar not stay grounded by a fear of the unknown.

He has fought through the grief that I had birthed; he has built a foundation through his stamina and persistence. He believed when no one else did, he heard the cries for help that no one else could hear, he stood up for those too far gone to stand up for themselves. He is strong and so am I.

It is inevitable that this day would come, the day I would join the others in the world beyond. If my father can do all this then what is stopping me from taking just one step.

But still, I cannot. What if the world comes crashing down and the grief within his eyes drowns him? What if the ever-growing strain of holding the weight of the world finally brakes him? What if he forgets about me?

Then something catches my eye, a small butterfly with sun dancing upon its wings, flying across the horizon. Landing on a leaf just above my father's head.

It is then that I truly know what I am to do.

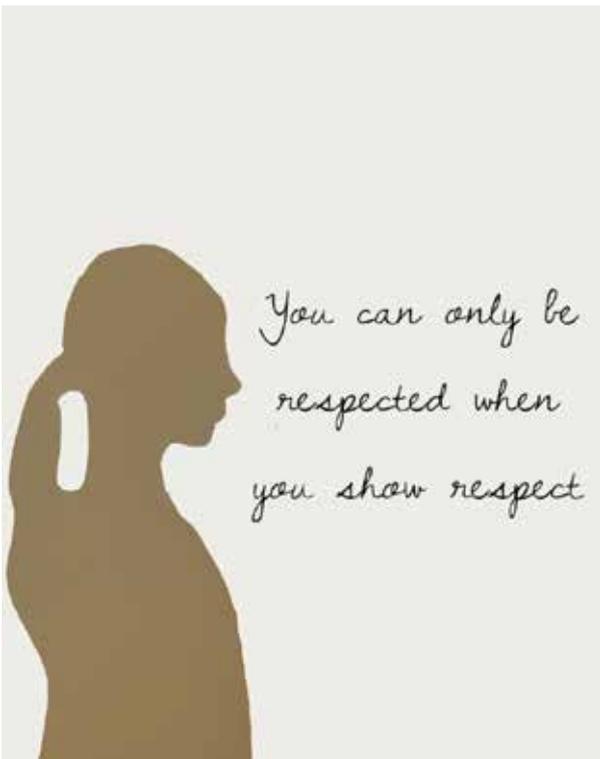
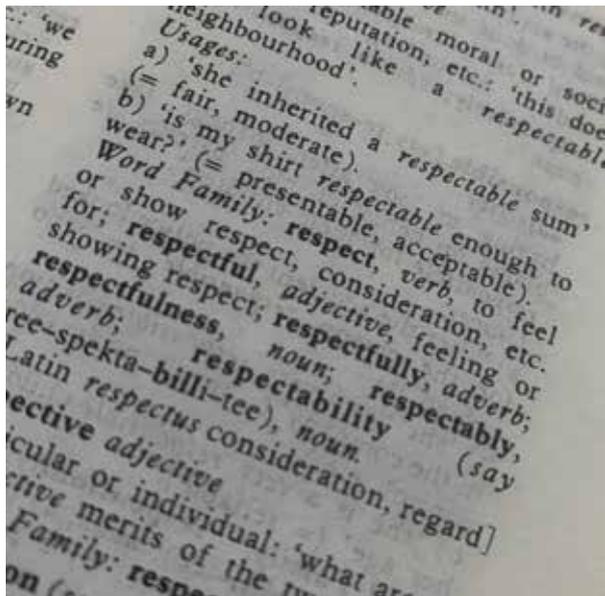
The colours will not take me away from my father, but it will bring me closer, I will always be with him wherever he goes there while being a piece of sunlight guiding him even on the rainy days.

The end is merely the beginning of a new chapter. Catching has been heard, Crow has had her revenge but what is my end?

That's when everything stilled the gushing stream froze, the whispering of the wind ceased, the butterfly hung as if suspended from a string trying to break free.

That's when I finally knew my end, I have to set my father free.

I am not leaving, I'm just saying goodbye, until the next chapter. ■



Sara Clarke
Year 8 · John Paul College

Rispetto

Rispetto is Italian for respect. Respect is not given to someone, you must earn respect through trust and honesty.



Chelsea Giblett
Year 9 · John Paul College

Respecting Different Individuals

My piece is about having respect for different cultures and people. The women in this piece represent different cultures and different lives. Some of them have speech bubbles saying different things like 'kindness' and 'friendliness', these are all different words that are like the word respect.



Samira Feijten, William Berger and Amelie Porter
Year 7 · CRC Melton

Ceramics



Shanessa Teves
Year 8 · CRC Melton

Coloured pencil



Lucas Bowen
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting



Shekinah Cabral
Year 7 · CRC Melton

Digital artwork



Sinead Bradford
Year 9 · CRC Melton

Acrylic Painting

UNTITLED

Luca Carcelli · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Then I was a criminal. Around 15 years I was just in my early twenties and was not in a good place, I was living with a couple of my mates in quite a scary and dangerous place. Being surrounded by scary and dangerous people I had to adapt into this sort of living.

My friends that I was living with at the time were really sketchy people, they would always have random people over and they would sell things to them, I knew what they were doing, and it frightened me. They had joined a gang and no one in their gang really respected me and they all hated me. Because my friends were in that gang, they also had to hate me and be disrespectful to me to be accepted into the gang and have protection. I did not feel safe living here anymore, but I couldn't get out because I had no money or anywhere to go.

I knew what I needed to do, I needed to get respect from them and join their gang, so I did what had to be done. I had gone across the neighbourhood to their rival gang, shot one of them and flipped one of their cars over and burnt it until it blew up. I had successfully done that and earned "respect" from the gang and got protection. To keep their trust

and respect I had to keep doing missions for them like that. Then something really bad happened and I got arrested. I swore on my own life that when I get out, I was never going back.

Now I am an ex-convict who has learned his lesson. I did my time in prison. Six years I had to be in there, I had done time for an armed robbery and for being in the possession of narcotics and dealing cannabis. I'm a fully change man now, I'm now in my early forties and I have a wife and two kids, a 11-year-old girl and a 15-year-old boy.

It's really hard for me to support my family, being an ex-convict makes it really hard to find decent paying job. I'm currently un-employed but I'm never going back to my life of crime. My family really struggles; some nights we don't have a dinner or even a place to stay, but right now we are all staying with my wife's parents until we get back on our feet. We didn't want to have to stay there but there was nowhere else to go, and we couldn't stay with my family. I haven't spoken to them in years because they are disappointed in me for being a criminal, even though I have changed they couldn't ever stop seeing me as a horrible criminal. ■

PAPA

Tommy McAuliffe · Year 8 · De La Salle College

I still see your smile when we arrive, you wear your red gumboots and warm beanie almost covering your eyes.

I see it in your eyes, you try and try I wish you could remember that it's me.

"G'day mate. G'day buddy..." I see it in your eyes, you try and try

It's ok, you're not alone, I'm here with you right now.

I hear about the old days when you were young like me,

You were strong, and brave, and in control, and healthy, you held your trophies high up to the sky.

Even though you have forgotten, it's in there somewhere, always our number 1 jockey,

We walk with you in pride, we will remember for you, I see it in your eyes you try and try. ■

WILL YOU BE MY FRIEND?

Geordie Tsirotis · Year 7 · De La Salle College

This is the story of an alien named Bork. One day he was flying his spaceship, gazing at the beautiful stars and the breath-taking planets when he felt something. Something in his chest, a feeling of loneliness. He didn't understand. He had been living in space for years, just him and his trusty spaceship, yet he felt the need to make friends.

He decided he would find the nearest planet with life and make a friend, then it would be him and his spaceship and a friend, someone who would reply and someone who would laugh at his jokes. He looked at the dashboard, it read that a planet called Earth was approaching. He looked up to see a beautiful blue and green marble in the distance. Yes, he thought, this is where I will meet my friend.

Bork landed in a park surrounded by a sprawling glass building and shining skyscrapers. As soon as he landed however people were running away. Why? Bork thought, he had been to many planets and the residents had never reacted like this. "Freak!" they screamed. Bork was running up to

people, "Will you be my friend?" he said, but people just shrieked, "It can speak!" In a short while the park was empty. Bork sat down on a park bench alone. What's wrong with me, he thought, I am a freak. He felt a hand on his shoulder.

"Hi their Mister."

Bork turned around. "Hello," he replied. Behind him he saw a little girl with wide eyes and a friendly smile.

"Are you lost?" she said.

"No," Bork replied. "I'm looking for a friend." He thought, why hasn't she run away yet?

"I can be your friend," the girl responded. A friend! Bork could not believe it!

"Yes," he said, "Yes, yes, yes!" And just like that Bork made a friend. They played games, talked and marvelled at the stars. It was just Bork, the friend and the spaceship. ■

UNTITLED

Nicholas Karavangelis · Year 7 · De La Salle College

Attack your dreams.
Let your brain and heart take control.
Work yourself to the limit.
Anticipate everything.
You are the best.
Slow down when you feel lost.
Be the best person you can.
End the worst.

Live up to your inspiration.
Inside you are happy.
Easily accept your challenges.
Various events will happen.
Eat the joy when you succeed. ■



Andy Tran
Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Wolf

TREES

Dimitri Fokianos · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Singing loud to birds passing by,
Ragefully swaying from side to side,
Scared of being swept up by the wind, slicing
through the sky

They walk in groups through sleeping
rainforests
Sheltering lively river streams, slowly crawling
in between mountainous boulders.

Branches sticking out like a ladder to any
young kid
They reach out to us with love and support
and when all hope seems lost, they provide
us with golden leaves to brighten our day.

Trees sometimes sit with sorrow, and cry
down their tears ■

WIND

Oliver Ianuzzi · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

The wind listens to us all. Whispering to each other and sharing secrets. Listening to everything we say. Sings when it sees the sun. Dances and jumps throughout the sky. Seeing everything there is to be seen. Blowing everything in its path. Singing and cheering whenever in a storm.

As powerful as a horse. Seen by no one. It's everywhere. Nothing it hasn't seen. Nothing it can't move. Sometimes over excited and creates tornados. Destroying everything in its path. As old as time. Gentle like a feather but sometimes unpredictable. Nothing can stop the wind. ■

A HELPING HAND

Christian Tringali · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

It was all his fault, nobody was coming to help him, nobody was coming to comfort him. He had no choice but to sit there on that filthy side walk and listen to his pessimistic thoughts about what he had done to the world. An hour goes by and the thoughts are getting darker and louder. He can't take it anymore. He unzips a small pocket in his large black backpack and snatches out a syringe filled with a green bubbly substance. 'This it it...this is the end of my road' he says to himself as he glares at the lethal substance in his hand. He shuts his eyes closed, with no intention to ever open them again. His right hand is shaking while his left is already cocked in the air with the syringe in its grip. 'Five...Four...Three...Two...O-'. Abruptly, he loses his grip of the needle and hears it hit the floor. He opens his eyes to see what had happened when all that he could see was a flash of a young man with blond hair and pale skin covered in sweat. 'POW!'. He feels a fist shaped object sink into his right side of his jaw. All the lights go dark.

About half an hour later he feels himself awakening from what seemed like just a bad dream. As he gathers back his consciousness he is shocked to see the same young man he saw just before he blacked out. He is talking to someone on the phone and he seems distressed. "Please! Help! My whole family is dead except for me and my little sister! What do you mean you have more important things to deal with?! He hangs up the phone and begins to sob. "What's going on, where am I?". He tries to stand up but immediately falls back to the floor when he realises his hands and feet are tied up with rope. "You tried to kill yourself! If I wasn't there to save you, you would be dead right now!" "Haven't you noticed, I have destroyed the world, there are plants killing people left right and centre. Tell me, what is the point of my life?". "To fix what you broke...and I'm gonna help you. Let's try this again, I'm Steph-" "No mate, you're an idiot. There is no fixing this, more than seventy percent of last week's population are nothing other than a lifeless corpse". "I'm not letting you go, you killed my mum, my dad, and my younger twin brothers. You have to try". "Fine, I'm Professor Chung, nice to meet you Steph". "Ok, so what do we have to do to get rid of these life taking shrubs" "You get me to my lab without killing me and I'll be able to whip up a serum in five minutes". "If that's true why haven't you done it already?!" Steph says in a rather angry manner "Its not that simple kid, you have to bring the serum inside the mother brain and use it their to revert things back to normal and quite frankly my body nor my mind is not capable such things".

The two men begin their walk to the abandoned science lab. Mr Chung is wearing only one shoe that is filled with holes, a filthy lab coat that has been torn to bits and some brown pants that are almost fully covering his right leg, but up to his knee on his left leg. His left foot (the one with no shoe) is naked red raw. "So...why did you create the chemical that created this mess in the first place professor?" "Believe it or not, I was trying to cure world hunger. Imagine all those families, all those kids dying of starvation finally being able to eat, eat as much as their stomachs desire". Steph has no words to respond to this, instead he would much rather reply with a simple smile, not a happy smile more like a sympathetic smile.

They arrive at the lab, one of the entrance doors have been knocked off its hinges and is lying in the middle of the hallway. "You wait here... Steph" About twenty minutes later Steph finds himself eating the last snacks in the Professors backpack when professor Chung comes waltzing down the hallways with a big fat smirk on his face holding an orange substance inside of a half broken test tube. "Now all we have to do is get it in there, and that's where I come into play. All I need is some kind of tool to create a way to get into the mother b-" before Steph could finish his sentence professor Chung hands him a model XL18 flamethrower. "This bad boy is over one thousand degrees and goes as far as 10 meters". "So you got a car kid?" "I'm glad you asked professor".

Walking back towards where the two met they can see in the distance a trashed, beaten down, dark brown Honda Civic. "Here we are, I'll drive". The look on the Professors face was expressing that he is second guessing this whole idea.

"Hey kid, why do you wanna help me so bad" He says while sitting in the passenger seat. "It's my sister professor, she's only six years old. She's at home at the moment, with our Aunty. I can't risk losing her too, without her I have nothing".

Green is everywhere they look, smeared on the buildings, shrubs filling up the roads, even green toxins dancing in the air. Steph glares over to an overwhelmed looking professor Chung "Hey...we are gonna fix this, if it's the last thing we do" Chung replies with a rather dreadful nod, like he wants to fix things but he doesn't believe it's possible.

After a long hour and eleven minutes of driving they arrive at the mother's brain. "It looks like a chocolate sphere but instead with plants" says Steph, trying to stay positive. In reality he is as scared as he has ever been before, fearing for his

life. Steph slowly but surely gets out of the car and softly closes the door. Mr Chung is watching him from the passenger seat also trembling in fear. Watching his every step, Steph knows he must stay away from the roots on the floor at all costs, or else he may awaken the mother brain and I don't think anyone left in this wasteland of a world would want that. Sweating bullets, he eventually makes it across. He stops and thinks about how much the area reminds him of his family. His beautiful mother, his loving father and the two people he mourned for the most, his playful, adorable younger twin brothers. Maybe the area reminded him of his family because this was the evil thing that took them away from him.

Steph shakes out of his daydream, he ignites the flame thrower and starts making his way into the mother brain. By the time his done he looks back at professor Chung wondering if he should turn back. The Professor replies by locking the car doors so he can't enter until the job is finished. He is now inside and like he was in solitary confinement, he could only see one colour...green. He managed to scope out one thing that wasn't as green though, more a light red. The thing was throbbing, pounding, like it was pumping stuff outside of the cylinder. Steph finally realised what he was looking at. He slowly removes the broken test tube from his pocket, takes a few long but quiet steps towards the brain and begins to suck in some deep breaths. He gets right up next to it, it is almost eye level to him. He takes one massive breath and says to himself "This is for my sister". His long white hand turns the test tube until there is no more of the substance coming out of it. The liquid begins to bubble on the brain. It begins its process of killing it, melting through the brain.

After about thirty seconds of continuous melting

the beating starts to take a toll and slow down. "I did it, I did it!". The cylinder quickly regrows the little doorway he burnt with the flamethrower trapping him inside, and this time it's getting smaller and smaller by the second. He starts to panic and grabs the flamethrower from the ground. He only has about fifteen seconds left so he must act quickly. He begins to slowly but surely make his way out. He does it just in time. A close overdose of adrenaline makes him take a much needed rest before he gets in the car. A dying root slowly lifts off the ground behind him. Mr Chung is yelling as loud as he can "WATCH OUT!" but before Steph could get a grip of what was going on the root uses its last amount of strength to penetrate his heart, leaving him lifeless on the scene. Professor Chung pauses staring blankly at Steph's lifeless body and thinks about how little he knew Steph but how much Steph was willing to do for him and his mistakes. "We lost a great one today" he jaws in an almost empty, voiceless tone with a handful of guilt.

Driving away from the scene, he sees big groups of people filled with joy. Everything is finally back to normal. Not Professor Chung, he is the least gleeful of them all. Chung feels as if he is responsible for Steph's death and it is his fault Steph's rotting corpse was put in that death trap in the first place. He can't take it, negative after negative thoughts bombarding his head. 'You have no purpose.' 'You are the reason families are left in despair.' 'Except it Professor, except your suicidal fate'. Holding his foot on the acceleration he turns the wheel to his right hand side, pulling him and his car straight off the main bridge...BOOM! The car and Chung's skinny little body had been blown to bits, splattered all over the highway. Leaving the city in even more wreckage than it was in before. ■

FACE

Charlotte Verberne · Year 9 · Star of the Sea College

A face, a reminder, a memory,
plagued me every day.
It turned my heart cold as stone
and changed my green eyes to grey.

Her long blonde hair and shimmering eyes,
served as only a reminder.
For the man whom I loved,
and who had died, which made me much less
kinder

The agony I felt at his death,
was much too hard to bear.
It was as though the walls were closing in,
there was no time to spare.

So I drowned myself in lavish goods,
And punished my step-daughter
to mask my nameless pain I said,
Yet I had led her to the slaughter.

I made her cook and I made her clean,
for then I could not see her.

Yet her song which echoed through the halls,
was clearer and clearer and clearer.

The melody seeped through every bone,
As a river would fill a lake.
And made me wonder maybe she
does not deserve heartbreak.

Perhaps the pain will fade someday,
and her face won't prompt such sorrow.
But until then I cannot look,
for her face was something borrowed. ■

I wrote this rhyming poem from the perspective of the 'Wicked Stepmother' explaining why she chose to treat Cinderella the way that is portrayed in the original fairytale. It is because Cinderella reminds her of her dead husband (Cinderella's father) and she cannot bear to look at her, for she loved her husband so much. She feels slightly conflicted (stanza 5 and 6) about her treatment but ultimately cannot bear the pain. This poem humanises the step-mother and shows how fairytales can be duplicitous, a tactic that is often used in modern adaptations of greek myths.

DAWN

Martin Tran · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

The sun rises,
And night is no more,
The sky explodes with light.

As the dawn reminds the moon to leave,
The stars hide in pitch-black blankets,
For the clouds to rush in.

Birds fly endlessly towards the light,
With all their strength and might,
The day has started, proud and bright. ■



Andy Tran
Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

Pandemic

WHY WE SHOULD SHOW RESPECT

Zara Contreras · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

Hello my people of the world! Today I am trying to convince you to use respect in your everyday lives. I am going to give you some reasons why we HAVE to use respect. I guarantee you will always use respect and show all your friends this paper after to read this.

Firstly, we have... What is respect? Respect is caring for each other, being kind, polite and things like that. Respect helps us to feel safe and to express ourselves. Being respected by important people in our lives growing up teaches us how to be respectful toward others. Respect in your relationships builds feelings of trust, safety, and wellbeing. Think about it... if we used respect all the time, there would be no bullying, no wars, equal chance of speaking up, no racism, no second wave of COVID and things that are really bad. One way to get respect is by respecting others. If we don't respect someone you can't expect them to respect you!

Secondly, it is very very important to respect yourself. Respecting yourself makes you do great things in life. If you respect yourself, you could do the impossible! And also work very hard to do the

IMPOSSIBLE! Don't put yourself down because it really doesn't do anything. Be happy with yourself, the way you look, the size of your body and more things like that. Respecting yourself can make you accomplish your dreams or make you do something you have wanted to do your whole life! For example, when I was little I wanted to be a superhero that saves Christmas trees from falling down and a person who blows up balloons! The Christmas tree was going to fall on dad once and I saved it from falling by catching it! So, I was a superhero after all.

The final reason is, respect in our community. If we didn't have respect in our community I could just easily walk down the street and punch the first person I see in the face. I could steal some money. I could let my dog go into someone's property and poop on their doorstep. You get what I mean? So, this is what could happen if we didn't use respect.

Thank you for reading my paper about respect. I hope you all start using respect if you don't already. It will make our beautiful world a better place. ■



Xavier Petrou
Year 3 · St Finbar's Primary School

Collage Texture Flowers



Max Adamsons
Year 1 · St Finbar's Primary School

Kookaburra

ANIMALS SHOULD NOT BE KEPT IN ZOOS

Alina Benkovic · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

Animals should be running for kilometers in the wild, you wouldn't want them to be locked up in cages/be trapped in small lands, would you? Well, I personally don't agree with it, but others may think differently.

Animals like lions are used to running for kilometers and kilometers in the wild, but in zoos, they are either being locked up or have a small space to roam around in the zoos and being scared with all of the camera flashes. That's not fair for the innocent, harmless and poor animals!

One reason why they should not be in zoos is because they are not in their natural environment, so they lose their natural instincts. So, if the zoo lets them free, they will most likely not survive because, well, they don't know how to! Animals will also lose the ability to hunt and to other natural animal things to survive.

Another reason why they should not be in zoos is because unfortunately, some zoos treat the animals horribly. They would cruelly HURT them and lock them up in small cages with barely any food. The zoo people would also FORCE them to do tricks and unnatural things like monkeys roller skating. It's horrible, sad and would ruin an animal's life! And the people who visit the zoo wouldn't know that they hurt the animals when it's closed! All locked up and to never, ever, ever fail a trick or

else they would get hurt so the animals are scared to get hurt so they instantly do the trick correctly.

Although there are bad things about animals being in zoos, there are also good things about them being in zoos. They would breed the animals in a good way so that the species of the animal would grow in case it got extinct in the wild! And they would release them into the wild after they know how to survive so they would live a happy life!

Another reason why is that the zookeepers can educate others about the animals because they know all about them because they are in the zoo! Maybe a school would come for an excursion and they would learn all about the animals at the zoo!

One last reason on why the animals should stay at a zoo is because some zoos, like Werribee Open Range Zoo here in Melbourne, would let the animals roam free in wide, open plains! They would give GIGANTIC lands for the animals to run, and when I went there in January. We went in a safari bus and could see all the animals and the giant, enormous and lovely lands! The harmless breeze was filling up the bus and it was the best day of my life!

So, even though some zoos give a lot of land, I think it is better that animals should stay in their natural environment so that they can live a happy life without being hurt or bombarded with camera flashes. ■

RESPECT THE WORLD

Evelyn Gattuso · Year 2 · St Finbar's Primary School

From the tallest trees to the smallest leaves, the world will grow bigger with respect.

Respect the plants that grow from a seed and respect the sky too.

Respect everything in every way and you will grow happy.

Respect the animals that roam on land before they go extinct,

respect the environment, and the trees will grow tall.

Respect your friends and they will grow happy.

Make new friends and bring them gifts.

Help your brothers and sisters, and your parents.

But sadly the world isn't working, animals are becoming extinct.

We need to work together to stop polluting the world.

Limit the amount of plastic that we use and buy.

We need to make changes to save the world. ■

RESPECT THE EARTH

Isabella Benkovic · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

The ocean is a marvellous and beautiful place,
That's why humans should not be treating it like
it's a disgrace.

The poor animals are suffering,
All they want is their animal friends to not be
struggling.

Recycle, don't litter or use plastic straws,
Otherwise all animals will be on the ocean floor.
If humans keep littering the ocean will get polluted,
The environment for them will be better suited.

Don't buy products with species that are on the
verge of extinction,

Stay strong and hold to your convictions.
Make sure to make sustainable food choices,

Or you won't hear the animals' voices.

DO NOT harm the environment just leave it as
you see it,

Keep it as it was made – every little bit!
The animals deserve to have a good home,
Just like the people living in Rome!

Never go to places that encourage animal tricks,
When they do something wrong, they just get a
load of kicks.

Don't go to places that put animals in small places,
Otherwise you will see their sad faces!

Just remember animals deserve their own rights,
And not losing their lives and fighting the fights! ■

SMALL THINGS

James Luck · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

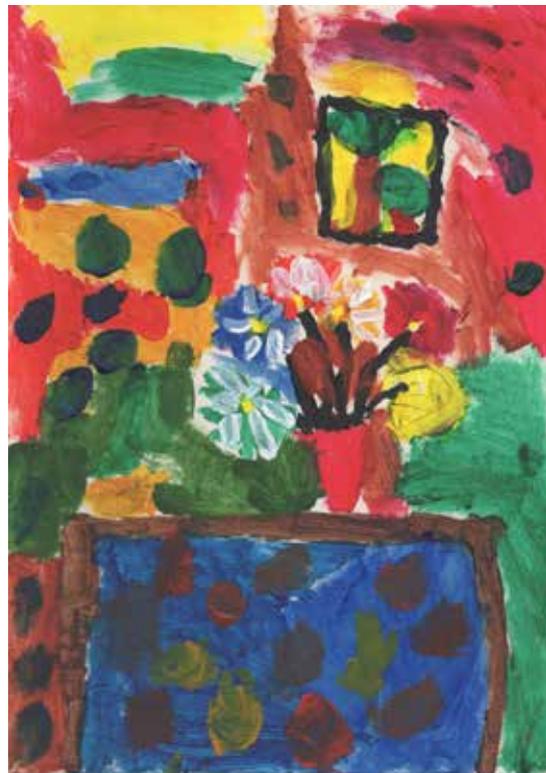
Respect can be shown by doing small things
We can all appreciate the comfort it brings

Giving it is something only you can decide
What gets in the way is something called pride

People forget that others have feelings
Being rude and intense in their dealings

The bullying that we do in schools
In adulthood makes us look like fools

A thirst for having our own way
Can prevent making someone's day ■



Evelyn Gattuso
Year 2 · St Finbar's Primary School

Home Still Life

STUCK IN DANGER

Lucy Park · Year 5 · St Finbar's Primary School

I held Sophia's hand extra tight, squeezing it every so often. You couldn't blame me, we were in the middle of who knows where in the pitch black of night, the moon our only source of light. We'd eaten all the food, and the river water and berries tasted awful. My Nike hoodie wasn't keeping me warm; the temperature was -0. Whenever we stepped on something, we screamed, before realising it wasn't a snake. My mouth felt like a dead leaf, all crumpled and cracked. I knew Sophia felt the same way, she was just trying to hide it. She always tried to act like she knew everything, even though she didn't. We walked for hours and the bag on my back was getting heavier as we went.

"Sophia." I moaned, stopping to take the bag off my shoulders.

"What?" She snapped, turning around and looking into my hazel eyes.

"Can you please take the bag?" I pleaded, giving her puppy dog eyes.

"No, you were the one who insisted on bringing it here!" she exclaimed, throwing her arms up into the air like mum did. She did have a point – but that didn't stop me arguing.

"Pleasssssseeeee! I've been carrying it for about three hours, while you just walk in front, pulling me along. I mean, you are sixteen next mon-"

"FINE!" shouted Sophia, snatching the bag from me like an angry toddler. After that, well, she didn't speak to me for the rest of the night.

My eyes eventually adjusted to the sun. My bag, which I was using as a pillow, felt lumpy. I turned to the tree stump next to me. A tall figure lay in a heap, their hair a wild mess. While Sophia slept, I made a fire. "I just need to find some kindling..." I thought. I pulled out my leftover chocolate biscuit that I was not willing to share with Sophia, from my bag, and then I realised that I had not had a drink since yesterday afternoon. Eventually I found some kindling and a few broken branches, which I then turned into a fire. I think it was the crackling of the fire that woke up Sophia, or maybe it was the screaming coming from the other side of the forest...

"Stella! What are you doing?" screeched Sophia, now wide awake. I could've replied, but I was already out of earshot. It was the screaming that caught my attention. I turned from left to right, trying to work out where it was coming from. I ended up going straight and came across a pond. There were leaves scattered all over, making it look like a pathway. Every few seconds I thought I saw

a hand pop out of it, but then disappeared again. I turned my back and started to walk away, when I heard the screaming again. It sounded like a boy. A young boy, about six or seven. The screaming grew louder and louder. I realised that it was coming from behind me. I turned around, rushed to the pond, and this time I saw a hand stick out.

His face was as red as a tomato, and his lips were as blue as a lollipop. As I helped him out of the pond, I remembered when I had once nearly drowned at the pool. People were screaming for the lifeguards, as Mum and Sophia were helping me out. But this scenario was different. I was just a twelve-year-old girl helping a boy I had never seen before, out of a pond. Sophia must've silently followed me, because she suddenly appeared and helped drag him out. Once he was out, Sophia took off her hoodie and draped it around his little body. His eyes were closed. He was breathing heavily. His eyes opened every now and again, then he smiled at me. We placed him in Sophia's lap, his drenched body made a pool of gross pond water all over us. I handed him my water bottle, but Sophia took it before he had even taken a sip. She fed it to him like he was a baby, and I sat there completely oblivious to what was happening. Sophia slid my bag under his head. She reached into her pocket and pulled out some raisins – I guess I wasn't the only one hiding food. She tipped some into her palm, and fed them to him, one by one. When they were all gone she sat him up; he was wide awake now.

"What's your name?" she asked him, smiling.

"Andrew." he replied.

"My name is Sophia, this is my younger sister, Stella." she said in a calm voice.

"How old are you?" he asked.

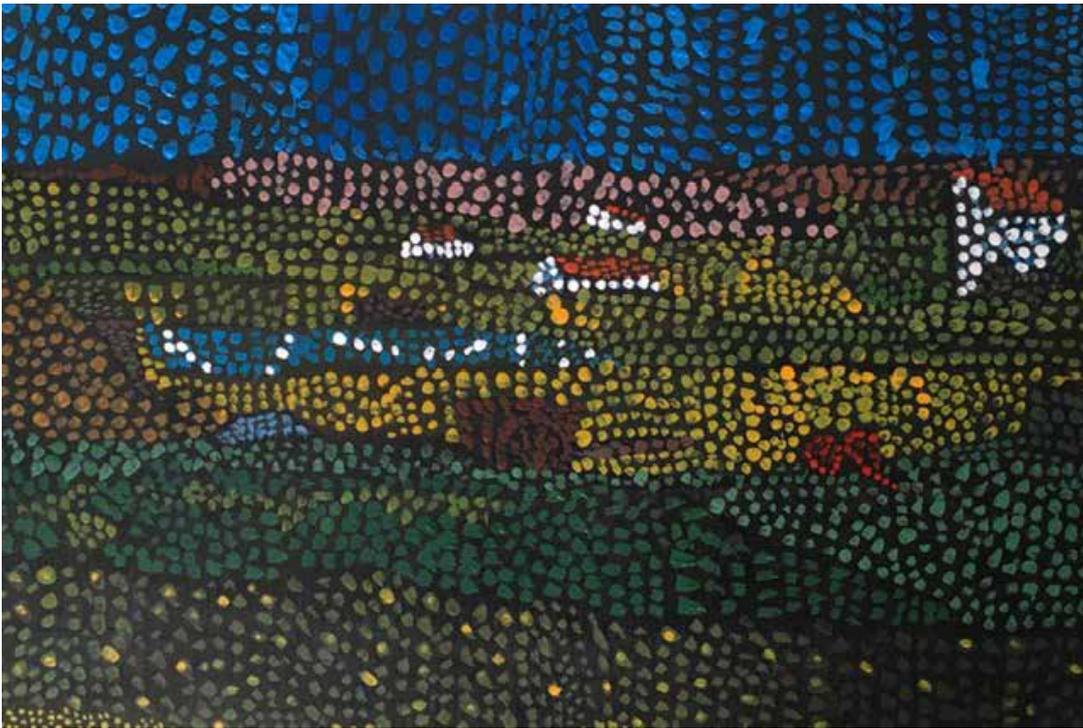
"I'm twelve and she is fifteen." I replied, pointing at Sophia.

"I'm nine." he replied, before closing his eyes gently and falling asleep. After a few moments of awkward silence, Sophia suddenly spoke.

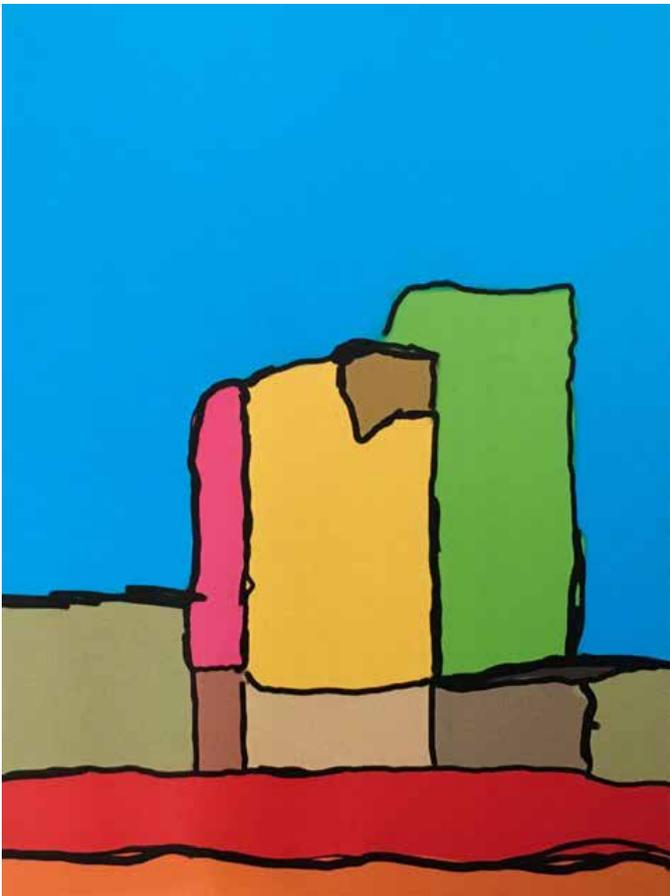
"Stella, don't you remember, Mum told us that a boy had gone missing a few years ago? It was on the news."

I tried to remember.

"This is him." she said, tears welling in her eyes. I suddenly remembered that story like it was yesterday, this boy was our brother. ■



Andrew Punt
Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



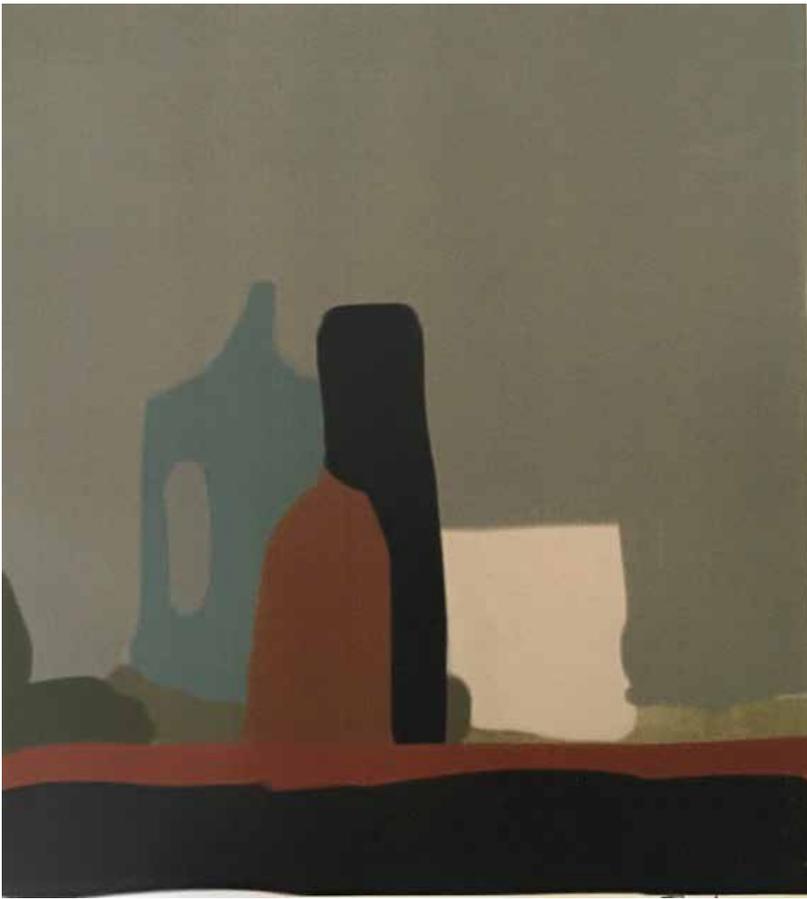
Jack Breen
Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Austin Haines
Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



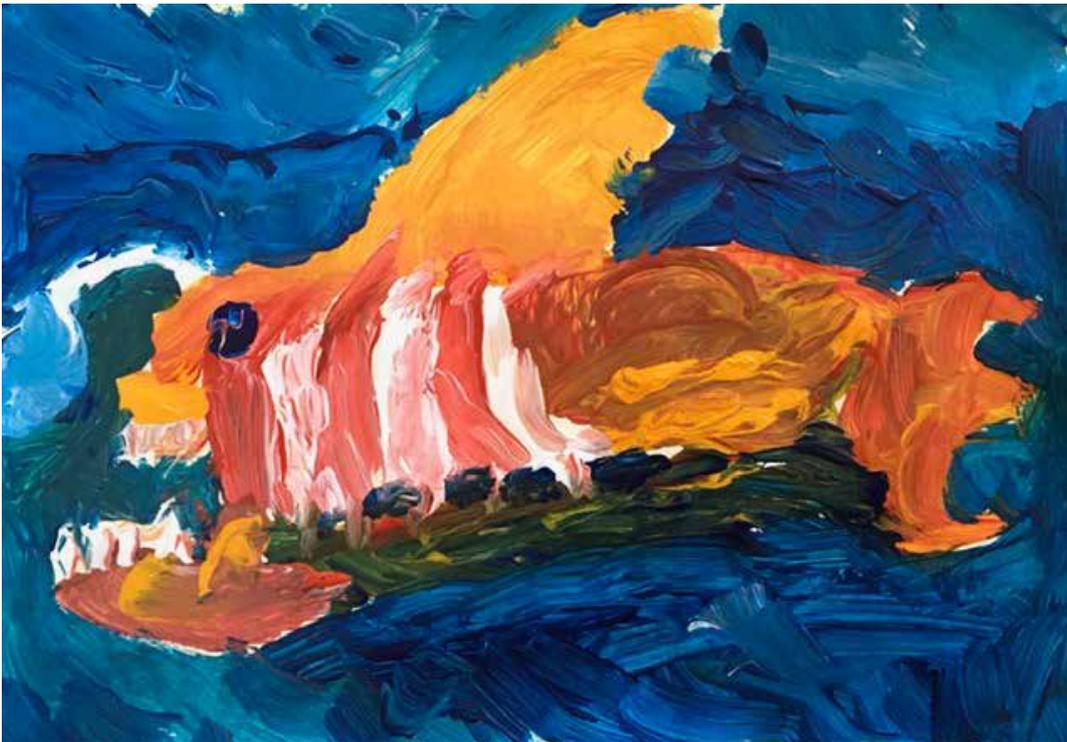
Kalan Lai
Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Jude Quigley
Year 6 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Rafe Wilson
Year 8 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Nicholas Davies
Year 5 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Samuel Jena
Year 5 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Jack Dalton
Year 7 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Ned Wilson
Year 5 · Xavier College, Kostka Hall



Harvey Burke
Year 9 · Xavier College

NO PLAY TODAY

Ryan Duong · Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Seemingly walking through an endless path of rain, step by step, drip then drop, I scan into the grey clouds around me, all signs of life drifted away, consumed by the watery owl of the dark anguished sky. Looking up, I see the heavens above showering me with infinite pebbles of water descending from a blanket of grey cotton. Listening, I ponder the orchestra of the sad dim sky, it played drums of lightning that carried a deafening beat, shaking my head side to side, like stomping in an empty echoing hallway. Beautifully and elegantly the whistles of the wind flew past my face. Wondering I stood there, if there was ever going to be an end to this storm when is it? Hopelessly I continued stepping in deep blue puddles of water and grasping the chill numb handle of my umbrella. Each sniff of air, I could taste the dullness in the foggy sky. Alluringly I look further up ahead, witnessing the same image I was presented with earlier, this time tasting something else, the flavour of an inevitable sign for a miserable long day waiting up ahead. ■

RIVER STREAMS

Dimitri Fokianos · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Gentle, soft and calm
Gushing through towering trees
Quietly they flow. ■

THE BOY INSIDE OF A COCOON

Yared Eshete · Year 9 · Simonds Catholic College

On a branch,
The responsibilities are pushing my cage to its limit,
The macho man shouting while he flutters away with his broken wings,
My bravado is emerging to the tip of my lungs,
The hammer in one hand and my emotions in the other,
The hammer weighs a ton but my emotions hold a sense of security,
I let go of the hammer.
It clanks at the bottom of my cocoon
My emotions begin to take place
It is blocked by the emotionless broken butterflies
Not broken physically, but mentally
I'm left with nothing
The inevitable butterfly form begins to take over my life
The big, scary, and unwanted butterfly emerges
I am now a man, but I am not me.
as I fly towards my responsibilities
I can sense a regret
Is this it?

Is this emotionless state of bravado really who I am?
My childhood is gone
My fears take its place
My insecurities find a way into my stomach like taking Panadol on a sick day
My stomach is full, not with food but the with pressure and weight of my responsibilities
It is stereotypical to have big strong beautiful wings
Not every caterpillar can have that.
Not every caterpillar wants that.
This image shown by countless tribes ingrained into my head
It is as toxic as a butterfly meeting a lizard
The death physically, but mentally, the image and the lizard are the same.
the hammer pounding on the house
the big arms strangling loved ones
the non-wanted aggressiveness men are stereotyped for
My pencil replaced with a basketball.
My passion replaced with abusiveness.
My life replaced with pain. ■

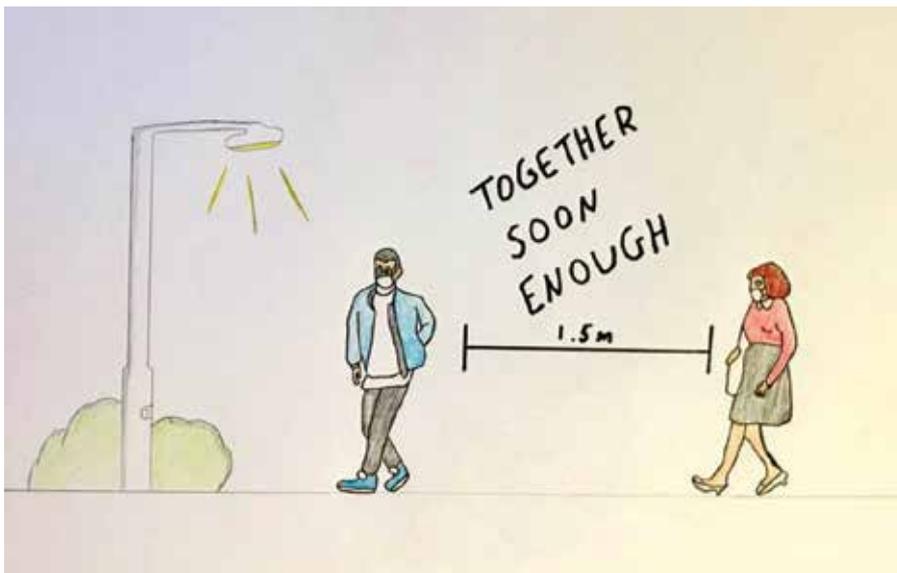
CHERRY BLOSSOMS (A HAIKU SERIES)

Alex Walkley · Year 7 · Simonds Catholic College

Frail like fantasies
Falling from cascading skies
Dreams of everyone.

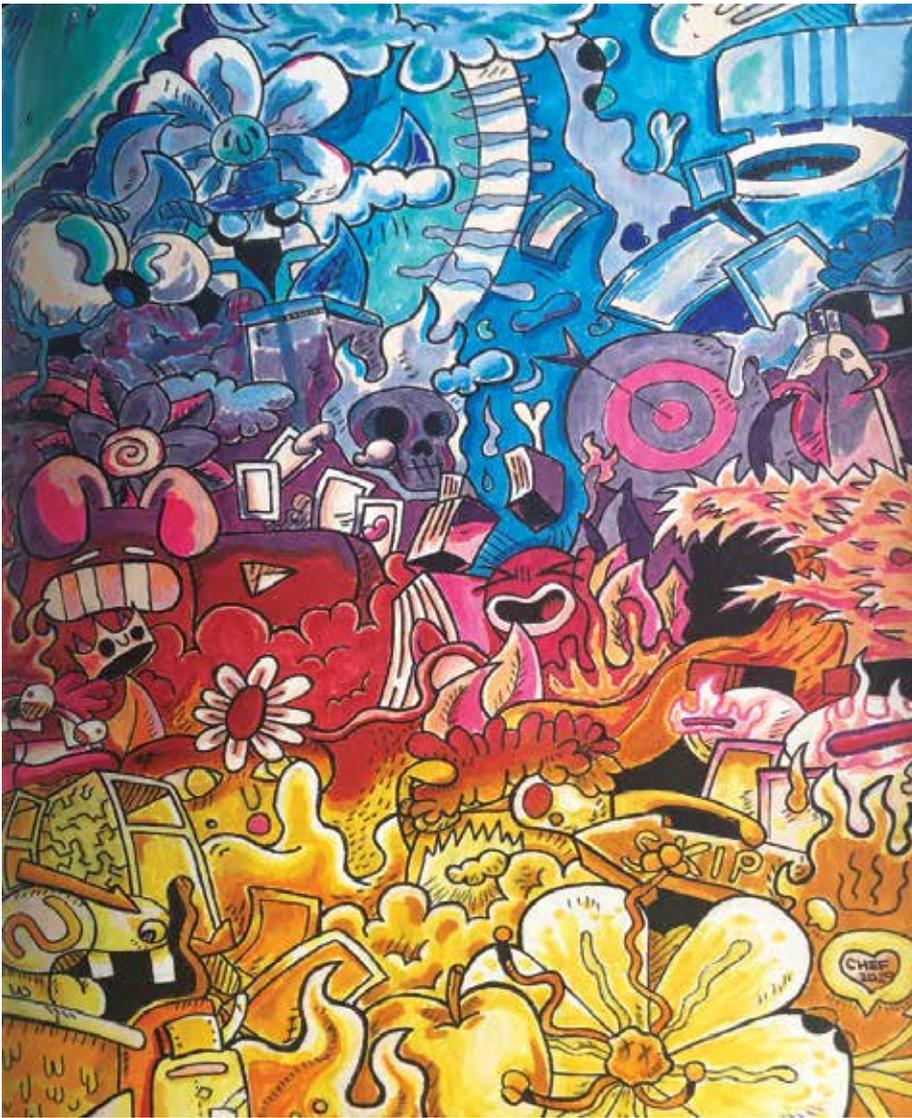
Standing there frozen,
endless dreams get in our way,
taking space and time.

Nature, a mistake.
Stands in our way and hurts us,
False hope rains from skies. ■



Faris Shumis
Year 8 · Simonds Catholic College

Together Soon Enough



Ivan Ramirez
Year 10 · Simonds Catholic College

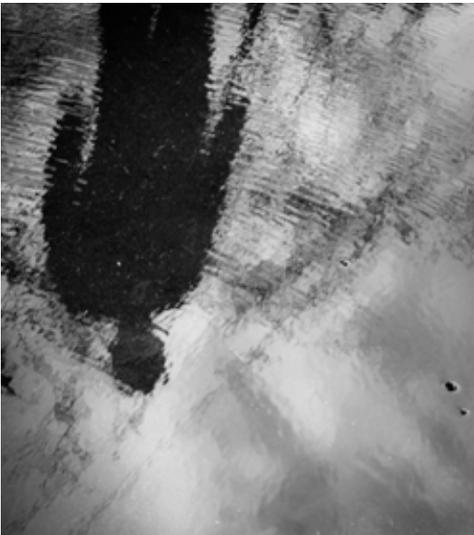
Pandemic



Georgia Maxwell
Year 10 · St John's Regional College

Isolation

These works are part of a photo essay completed on the theme of Isolation. They were taken during the second lockdown in Melbourne at a time when everyone is feeling frustrated by this pandemic. Loneliness is growing. Streets and shops remain empty. We are all missing loved ones and there is a great sense of wonder about when it will all end. But despite all of this there is still respect; respect for the rules we all face, respect for those on the frontline, and respect for each other as we battle the challenges that being in quarantine present us with.



BECAUSE YOU'RE WORTH IT

Kiana Jackson and Taila Gold · Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Your deplorable, horrible, despicable, ignorable.
You reiterate, evaluate, desiccate, and exacerbate.
Can't you accept the way you look?
Why don't I look like that princess from that book?
Cause. You. Don't. Belong.
And honey ... your body is just so wrong.
Hold up, let's take it back a notch.
I am not a parking ticket looking for your validation.
You are no longer allowed to park for free in our nation.
I conform in this society,
To be surrounded with variety.
Not to be burdened in anxiety.
Nothing seems to matter
When your head is full of chatter
"Gotta be flatter!"
Why should we strive for perfection?
When the media only specialise,
Those who deserve prizes,
Because of their perfect sizes.
So look in the reflection,
The only person holding you back,
Is your own. SELF REJECTION.
"Need to be that perfect size 0!"
Isn't she our hero?
She's a model,
But aren't are we all models, role models, to the ones just
like us?
There is no need to love your body with trepidation.
Stuck at the bottomless pit of hesitation.
False expectations appearing to be a real sensation?
It comes with a real vibration
Girl, you need a vacation.
I look at endless pictures
Girls pencil thin and flat.
I see them in the streets
Too scared to go and chat.
Let us grab your attention and tell you one thing,
We erase every imperfection through the fear of rejection.
Making lists of what we ate and what we hate.
Give it a break!
Because we're human. Not fake. ■



Anthony Heng
Year 10 · St John's Regional College

Mixed Media Portrait

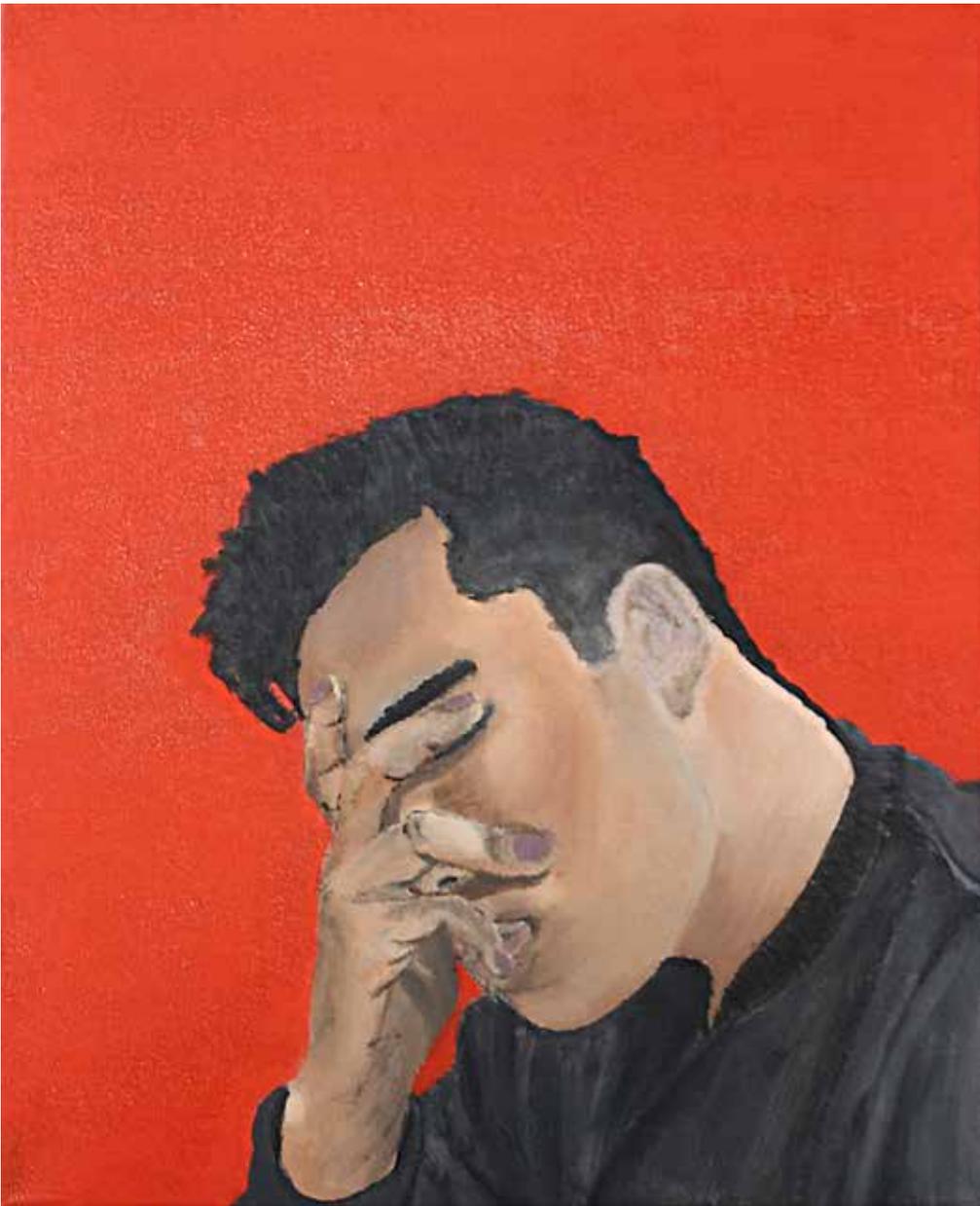


Matthew Jameson
Year 11 · Mazenod College

Childhood

Oil on canvas

This work reflects upon happier times during the pandemic.

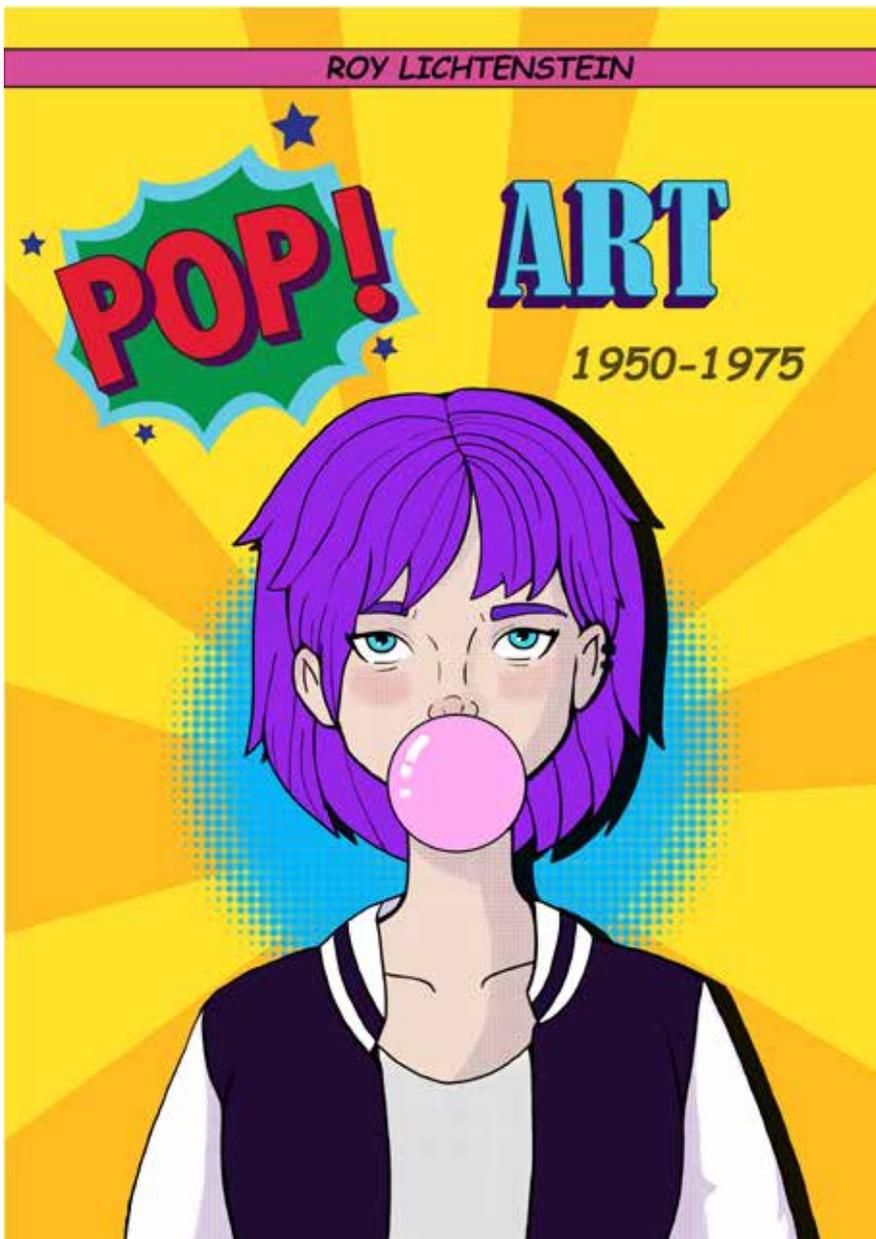


Steven Tran
Year 11 · Mazenod College

Disbelief

Oil on canvas

This work expresses the subject's frustration during isolation.



Elias Ng
Year 11 · Mazenod College

POP Art

Digital Illustration – Adobe Illustrator/Adobe Photoshop

This work explores the theme and characteristics of the modern style Anime digital illustrations in the traditional world of Pop Art. It explore the work of Roy Lichtenstein and pays homage to his aesthetic.



Dylan Kilgower
Year 11 · Mazenod College

Bound By Belligerence

Digital Illustration – Adobe Illustrator

This work explores the icon imagery from the Black Lives Matter protest. We are reminded daily to uphold our values and beliefs.

A HOME WITH NO RESPECT

Nathaniel Louey · Year 10 · Mazenod College

The blow stung against the woman's face, months of rage and frustration released upon her. Not a noise passed from her cracked lips, there was no point entertaining what would simply be another bruise to add to her collection. Yet she still felt herself shrinking, becoming a mere speck to the rising reptile called Mark.

"Get up," he spat.

Mark knew that she could not, yet her refusal to obey turned his face a richer shade of red rage.

Another strike.

Taylor watched in sick fascination. He hated seeing his mother lie helpless, yet wasn't his father the man he should aspire to imitate?

Silent, Taylor observed.

Mark helped the woman up. With a soft voice, he gave her his simple command.

"Go."

Trembling, she crawled her way to the kitchen, bracing herself against the walls. She was shaking too much to prepare the meal, her very soul the epicentre of the waves which immobilised her body.

A glass dropped from her quivering hands; time slowed as the broken beat of her heart quickened.

Noise and nausea combined to create a feeling of nothingness.

She knew what was coming.

The blow stung against the woman's face.

Taylor stared down at the vessel who both was and was not his mother.

For the women had lived the same life; worn the same erasing bruises.

"Get up." ■



Hamish Wagner
Year 7 · Whitefriars College



Jacob Barrett
Year 9 · Whitefriars College



Billy McIntyre-Wilson
Year 11 · Whitefriars College



Jon Escobar
Year 12 · Whitefriars College

Mind Games



Sebastian Van Dijk
Year 7 · Whitefriars College



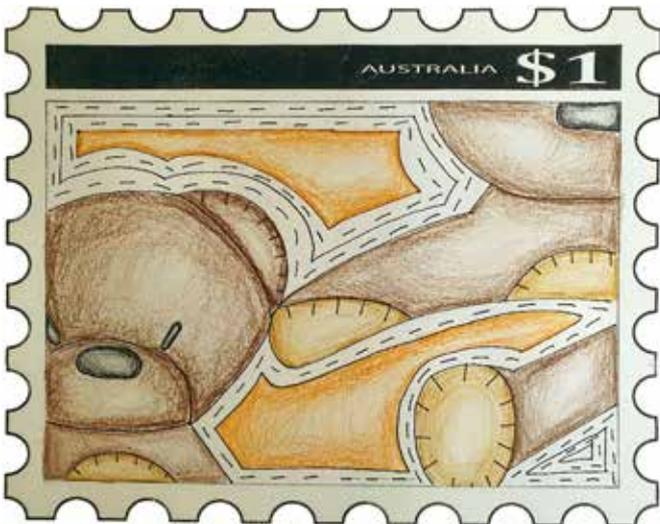
Aidan Mayorkinos
Year 9 · Whitefriars College



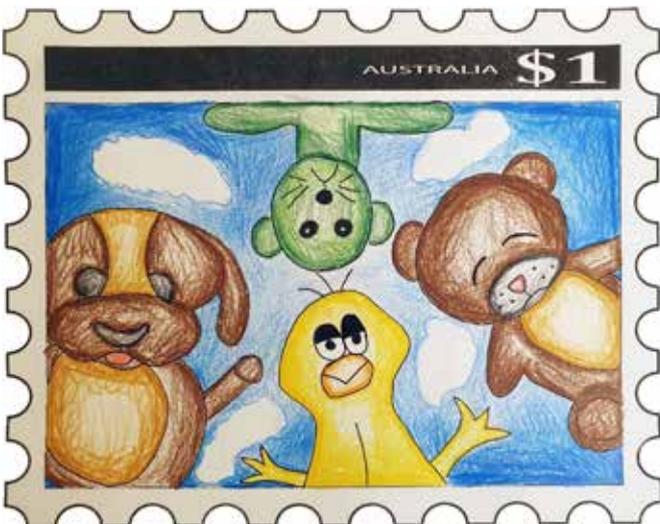
Leon Papanastasiou
Year 9 · Whitefriars College



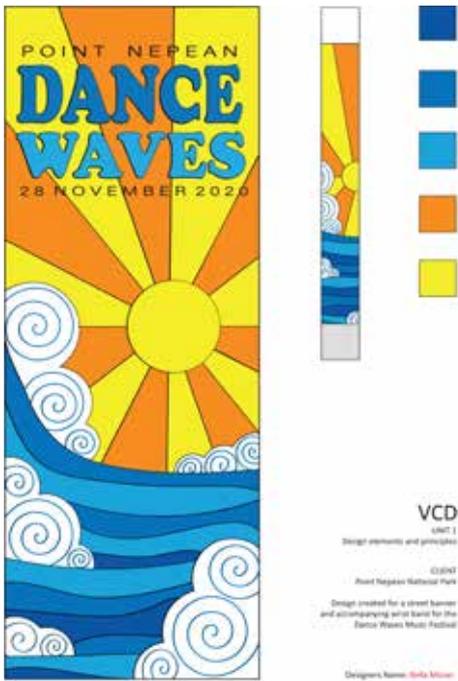
Aerin Donohoe
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Lucy Scutt
Year 7 · Aquinas College



Sarah de Jong
Year 7 · Aquinas College



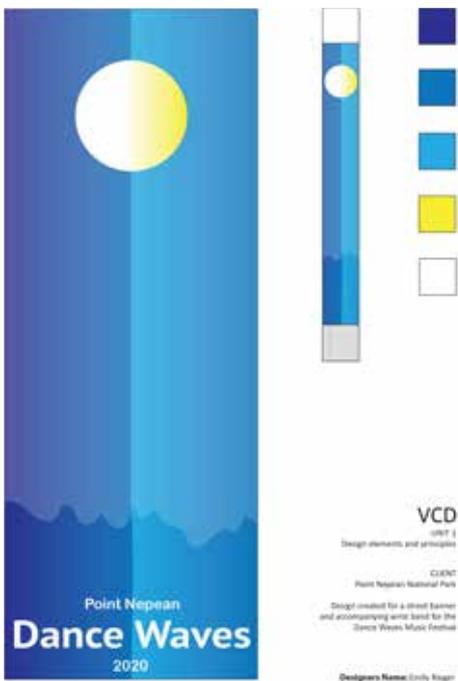
Bella Moran
Year 11 · Aquinas College

Street banner and wrist band for the Dance Waves Music Festival.



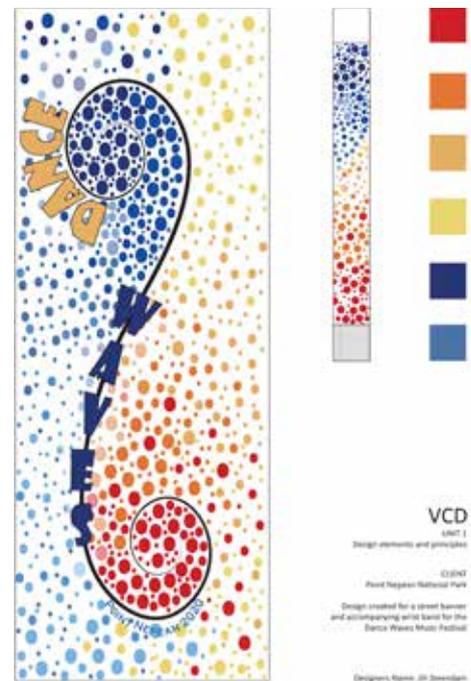
Charli Woods
Year 11 · Aquinas College

Street banner and wrist band for the Dance Waves Music Festival.



Emily Rieger
Year 11 · Aquinas College

Street banner and wrist band for the Dance Waves Music Festival.



Jih Steendam
Year 11 · Aquinas College

Street banner and wrist band for the Dance Waves Music Festival.

A WAR

Isabelle Kuyken · Year 10 · Aquinas College

The world joins as one to fight in the war
against a rival, never seen before.
The troops adorned in blue, prepare to fight
their bravery shines bright like the moonlight.
Others just like you and me play our part

We show our strength by spending time apart.
Our lengthy time in lockdown will conclude
and we will discover more gratitude
for all of the things we once took for granted. ■

WAITING

Imogen Pawlik · Year 10 · Aquinas College

The seasons change with the days,
Drifting autumn leaves
Followed by the shift
Of a chilling winter breeze.

The windows perfectly frame
A world to which I wish I could exist,
But for now I must wait
Until there is no risk.

The streets remain abandoned.
Sombre ambience clouds the minds
Of those who live trapped,
Confused and blind.

Birds live in complete freedom.
Soaring high above our issues,
Whilst we are left,
Reaching for another tissue.

Staying in will do us good,
Perhaps you could learn something new!
But know that when this is over,
I'll be waiting for you. ■

GROWING UP

Jessica Fegan · Year 10 · Aquinas College

I fondly remember all the special times we had.
Playing space, racing around the backyard and
joking around on the playset. He has grown up
now, I knew he could still hear me but he slowly
started to block me out.

New friends would come along and he would go
to school without saying goodbye. Leaving me
alone on his bed.

A few months ago, after his 14th birthday, I felt a
sudden pain in my chest. I had no clue what was
happening until I noticed my hand had become a
little transparent. It was strange, nothing like this
had ever happened before. I tried to ask him what
was going on but it was like he couldn't hear me.
God, I couldn't even hear myself. I was screaming
for him but nothing was coming out. It took a
few weeks but as more of me slowly started to
disappear, I realised what was happening.

He was forgetting me. ■



Cassie Wynne
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Cassie Wynne
Year 9 · Aquinas College



Tiana Bilos
 Year 9 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

Our History

Indigenous Australians faced prejudice and were alienated due to the colour of their skin. This art piece expresses and recognizes the Aboriginal culture which was diminished during the white invasion. The piece represents the Indigenous individuals which served in the Vietnam war. Indigenous individuals were stripped of their basic rights and discriminated against due to the colour of their skin, this artwork expresses Australia's recognition for the Aboriginal culture.



Zachariah Zirafi
 Year 7 · Catholic Regional College
 North Keilor

Kicking Goals

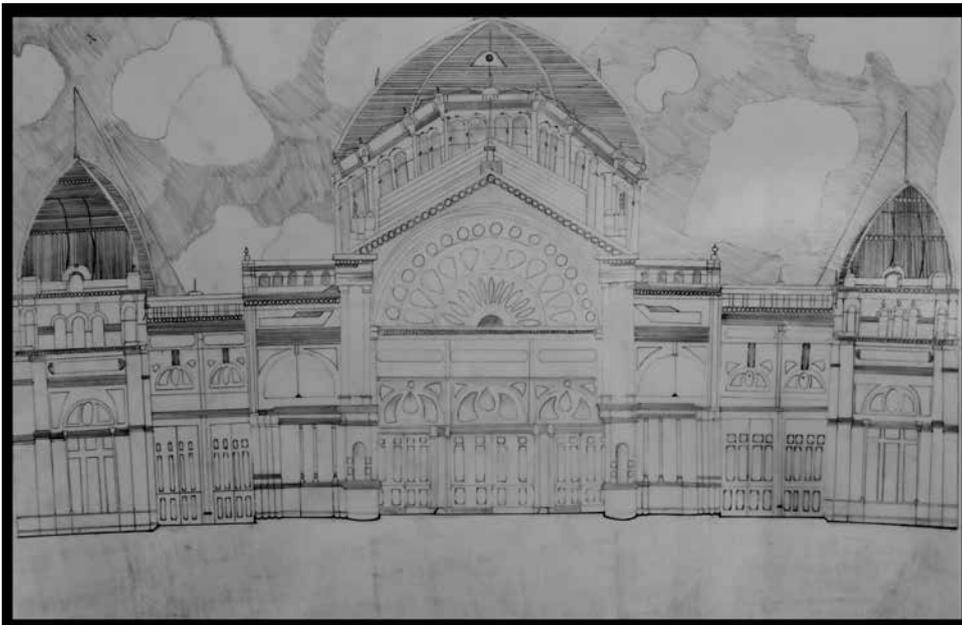
Covid 19 has changed our lives and because there is no vaccine, we have restrictions placed upon us to help stop its spread in our communities. We are told that we need to get the number down of those getting the virus. If we do, we are kicking goals and some of our restrictions will be lifted.



Liljana Fedcesen
*Year 10 · Catholic Regional College
North Keilor*

Rejuvenation

Respecting our world is a very relevant and present issue, as we are living in the midst of a pandemic and climate change. The world is subjected to so many devastations, which even recycling the smallest thing, such as the watering can in the piece, can make a difference. Recycling allows the world to take a step closer towards being healthier. It's important to respect the environment and be conscious of how we dispose of things, as it impacts future generations to come.



Tiana Bilos
Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Demanding Our Respect

You can look at a building and think about the design, its history or both. The Exhibition building is not only architecturally impressive, but so too is its history. Did you know that it was in this building that our Federal Parliament initially met? Although its use has changed over the years, it continues to stand proudly in the Carlton Garden's demanding our respect.



Joya Abdelmalak

Year 8 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

St Philomena

The sketch is of a beautiful saint, St Philomena who was the daughter of a Greek king who converted to Christianity. This sketch captures her praying and she appears to be full of grace.



Katrina Caliguiran

Year 9 · Catholic Regional College North Keilor

Killing Our World

It is time for us to stop and respect the world around us. If we continue living as we do our world as we know it will fade away. There is time for us to rebuild the damage we have done to help rebuild the beauty and balance needed in nature.

THE ONE WHO CARED

Tameka Haggett · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

The stale air surrounds me. There's nothing but grey for miles and every inch of me is cold. In an otherwise beautiful city, my heart is full of despair. I haven't eaten for weeks and I have no money. Although I have tried there's no one who cares. I've prayed and I've begged, but still I live here. In a beautiful city, filled with selfish people. But still I hope in a world full of darkness, there's one full of light. Enough to share. Enough for me.

As each day goes by and each person stares. I can tell what their saying even though I hear silence. They feel sadness for me, but still they walk by, because they don't care. No matter how many walk by, I hold onto hope, it's all I have. Even though I am poor, I am rich in hope.

More time goes by, and more people too. Ones full of selfishness with no light to share. But still I hope, and still I pray. That tomorrow is better, that tomorrow I change.

The next day seems the same. Another walks by. However, for the first time since I have been stuck

here, I see a smile. One full of joy. One full of light. One that may respect me. One that may care. What surprises me most is that he comes back. Money in his hand, happiness in his step.

He comes and sits, right beside me. His glance different from all the rest. He hands over money but says something first;

"I've just won some money, too much for me. I've walked through this city for many months. Each time I see you hoping for light. So, this is for you, to get your life back. As long as you promise me this, you won't lose your light."

Tears roll down my face, ones filled with joy. Ones without despair. I will keep my promise, because I've always dreamed of light.

I will be forever thankful for the one who was kind. The one who was selfless. The one full of light. The one who cared. For he was the only person to ever respect me and to acknowledge that I am a person too. ■

RESPECT

Talia Sequeira Leo · Year 9 · St John's Regional College

You are truly meek and lowly
The illness came in quickly and wanted to take
you apart
Ravaging your mind and body so slowly

I did not see the darkness that filled you
Rather, you respected what I needed and
Surrounded me with love so blinding
Teaching me respect and kindness, your pain
almost untrue

So patient and humble, I don't need reminding.

Scream, fight and stop with your meekness
There is no time for patience, for gentle, cancer
is not

But, I now know such an attribute is not your
weakness
You opened up my eyes and taught me a lot.

For you respect me, with your gentle and humble
heart. ■



Anthony Pham
Year 10 · Mazenod College

Respect

Digital print on paper

This work is a tribute to Dr Li Wenliang and his efforts to warn people about Covid-19.



RESPECT

SHARED STORIES ANTHOLOGY 2020