

A STUDY IN PURPLE

2020

Vision



MADE BY STUDENTS, FOR STUDENTS

Editors note

We're kicking off the year with a bang here at ASIP. This issue focuses on a multitude of topics from the Surrealist movement to the iconic Josephine Baker. As we enter a new decade, it is important to remember times gone by and the evolution of the century. 2020 Vision aims to give you an insight into both the past and present and will hopefully encourage you to enter the year reflectively, with a positive mindset.

I've loved reading the submissions we've received to see how you have interpreted the title. One of my favourite articles is an extract from Taylor Swift's 'Woman of the Decade' speech introduced by Khava Chilaeva. Swift's speech discusses the sexism in the music industry which is especially poignant given the recent #MeToo movement surrounding the acting world. Other submissions include poetry inspired by current events in Kashmir and an exploration of LGBTQ+ literature. Editing this issue has been another educational experience for me I'm confident that it will be the same for you. Happy reading!

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Thank you
Darcey for
our cover
image

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Black Venus

AHANA BANERJI

Ernest Hemingway called her the “most sensational woman anyone ever saw”. Pablo Picasso created paintings trying to capture her enthralling beauty. Jean Cocteau invited her into his intellectual and artistic circle of friends. Her name was Josephine Baker and her title was “Black Venus”.

As a bisexual black woman living in the United States in the 1920s, Baker was anything but satisfied with her position in life. At the age of 15, she left the slums of St. Louis and headed to New York City to join a Broadway chorus. Consequently she was immersed in the heart of the Harlem Renaissance, a movement which led to a great social awakening surrounding black identities and culture, and is often considered as marking the rebirth of African-American arts. This movement became one of the first in America to campaign for racial equality through the defiance of heteronormative and white American standards.

Although it subverted racist stereotypes, American social attitudes were not developing fast enough for Baker, and in 1925 she relocated to Paris aged only 19. Her move coincided with the maturation of the Art Deco movement and Baker soon cemented her reputation as a serious performer with the success of “Danse Sauvage”, in which she danced in a skirt made of artificial bananas, accompanied by her pet cheetah. Her performance challenged the exploited image and sexuality of black women.

In Paris, Baker managed to secure fame performing on stage and in films, breaking barriers as a bisexual woman of colour. Had

performances in Paris were progressive, quirky and inverted racial stereotypes. Conversely, in America, the most radical role given to a black actress at the time was to Hattie McDaniel, who portrayed Mammy in the film ‘Gone With the Wind’. The character of Mammy was one of great controversy, many civil rights activists accused McDaniel of pandering to the comfort of a white audience, and of being an “Uncle Tom” — a person willing to advance personally by perpetuating racial stereotypes.

By the end of the roaring twenties, Baker had cemented her position as key person in the Art Deco movement and Harlem Renaissance. She would go on to have a career in espionage as a French Resistance spy during World War II and in the 1950s, she became a prominent member of the Civil Rights Movement and even received death threats from the Ku Klux Klan.

After Martin Luther King Jr.’s assassination in 1968, she was offered unofficial leadership of the movement but declined, prioritising her children’s safety. Her image as a successful, intelligent, strong woman of colour is still significant today as we continue to strive to celebrate marginalised communities. Baker proved that to be called beautiful, a person did not have to adhere to Eurocentric beauty standards and binary gender expression. Other idols of the same movements, such as Gladys Bentley, Barquette and Ada “Bricktop” Smith, also became revered and together proved that there is no single definition of beauty. In today’s age of colourism and microaggressions

against non-Western style, it is as important as ever to remember this message.

Baker’s modern influence can be seen in the likes of Janelle Monáe, Samira Wiley and Zendaya, women who are confident in their skin and sexualities. Society has come a long way, as minority communities are, more than ever, being given the limelight, but to say it is the best it can be is simply wrong. It is no coincidence that famous people of colour in the media are more likely to be light-skinned. Colourism continues to thrive around the world, a result of colonialism and white supremacy, coming from the belief that lighter means whiter and therefore better. However, with pioneers like Josephine Baker dedicating their lives to a brighter future, we can continue to build on the foundations they provided. In the words of the Black Venus herself: “Surely the day will come when colour means nothing more than the skin tone, when religion is seen uniquely as a way to speak one’s soul, when birth places have the weight of a throw of the dice and all men are born free, when understanding breeds love and brotherhood.”

*“most
sensational
woman
anyone
ever saw”*

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A WOMAN IN THIS DECADE

KHAVA CHILAEVA

TAYLOR SWIFT'S SPEECH ON RECEIVING BILLBOARD'S WOMAN OF THE DECADE

It was the end of the decade and the start of an age in 2009, a 19-year old Taylor Swift accepted an award for video of the year, for the song she wrote in ninth grade: hit song 'Love Story'. This song established Swift as not only a generator of self-written hits, a control over music and messages they put out, that artists don't have, but also began a narrative of victimhood and a lack of agency over her detractors, that she had no part in creating. It is often only the success of her hit songs, that she herself wrote, that have eclipse the intense scrutiny of her character.

It seems the fact that Taylor swift is controversial largely because of her personality rather than her actual musical ability is in itself an expression of the double standards within the entertainment industry. It is indeed interesting to note that at pinnacle points within her career, she has also become viewed as an either or extreme character, according to the fluctuations of public opinion: a calculated manipulator, or the sweet girl-next-door and as always, , no individual can be defined or confined

within such scrutiny. I think the most important thing to understand while reflecting upon Taylor Swift's position as a songwriter and as a celebrity personality is that, we ourselves have to reflect on the way we judge a woman of her stature, and understand when we aren't judging her music and we're just judging her, instead of clever rhymes and confessional writing, we're holding women to an impossible standard of likability and not separating their public persona from musical talent. In actual fact, we seem to be really saying that if you are a woman if the public eye, 'you are damned if you do and you are damned if you don't.' Swift herself spins her own narrative of her career in her Woman of the Decade speech, upon receiving the honour this December, where she raises concerns about what the future of streaming means for artists rights, how women in the music industry struggle with impossible standards and how to achieve success without constantly striving for approval from the general public.

'So what does it mean to be the woman of this decade? I saw that as a female in this industry, some people will always have slight reservations about you. Whether you deserve to be there, whether your male producer or co-writer is the reason for your success, or whether it was a savvy record label. It wasn't. I saw that people love to explain away a woman's success in the music industry, and I saw something in me change due to this realization. This was the decade when I became a mirror for my detractors. Whatever they decided I couldn't do is exactly what I did.... Whatever they criticized about me became material for musical satires or inspirational anthems, and the best lyrical examples I can think of are songs like 'Mean,' 'Shake It Off,' and 'Blank Space.' And this reflex dictated more than just my lyrics. When Fearless did win Album of the Year at the Grammys and I did become the youngest solo artist to ever win the award, with that win came criticism and backlash in

2010 that I'd never experienced before as a young new artist. All of a sudden people had doubts about my singing voice, was it strong enough? Was I a little bit pitchy? All of a sudden they weren't sure if I was the one writing the songs because sometimes in the past I had had co-writers in the room. At that time I couldn't understand why this wave of harsh criticism had hit me so hard... now I realize that this is just what happens to a woman in music if she achieves success or power beyond people's comfort level. I now have come to expect that with good news comes some sort of pushback. But I didn't know that then. So then I decided that I would be the only songwriter on my third album, Speak Now, and that I would tour constantly, work on my vocals every day, and perfect my stamina in a live show. I decided I would be what they said I couldn't be. I didn't know then that soon enough people would decide on something else I wasn't quite doing right, and then

the circle would keep going on and on and rolling along and I would keep accommodating, over-correcting, in an effort to appease my critics. They're saying I'm dating too much in my 20s? Okay, I'll stop, I'll just be single. For years. Now they're saying my album Red is filled with too many breakup songs? Okay, okay, I'll make one about moving to New York and deciding that really my life is more fun with just my friends. Oh, they're saying my music is changing too much for me to stay in country music? All right. Okay, here's an entire genre shift and a pop album called 1989. Now it's that I'm showing you too many pictures of me with my friends, okay, I can stop doing that too. Now I'm actually a calculated manipulator rather than a smart businesswoman? Okay, I'll disappear from public view for years. Now I'm being cast a villain to you? Okay, here's an album called Reputation and there are lots of snakes everywhere.

In the last 10 years I have watched as women in this industry are criticized and measured up to each other and picked at for their bodies, their romantic lives, their fashion, or have you ever heard someone say about a male artist, I really like his songs but I don't know what it is, there's just something about him I don't like? No! That criticism is reserved for us! But you know, I've learned that the difference between those who can continue to create in that climate usually comes down to this. Who lets that scrutiny break them and who just keeps making art. I've watched as one of my favorite artists of this decade, Lana Del Rey, was ruthlessly criticized...in her early career and this year her incredible album is nominated for Album of the Year at the Grammys because she just kept making art. And that example should inspire all of us, that the only way forward is forward motion. That we shouldn't let obstacles like criticism slow down the creative forces that drive us.

But we need to keep advocating for women in the recording studios, behind the mixing board, in A&R meetings, because rather than fighting to be taken seriously in their fields, these women are still struggling to even have a chance to be in the room.

We now find ourselves fully immersed in a vast frontier that wasn't around last decade, and that is the streaming world. I've spoken out in the past about the future of revenue flow for creators and the songwriters and producers who are being left behind due to these rapid shifts and changes. I still don't think that record contracts or producers' agreements have fully caught up, and I hope that in the next decade, we can keep searching for the right solution for producers, songwriters, and creators. Don't you? Lately there's been a new shift that has affected me personally and that I feel is a potentially harmful force in our industry, and that is the unregulated world of private equity coming in and buying up our music as if it is real estate.

This just happened to me without my approval, consultation, or consent. After I was denied the chance to purchase my music outright, my entire catalogue was sold to Scooter Braun's Ithaca Holdings in a deal that I'm told was funded by the Soros Family, 23 Capital, and the Carlyle Group. Yet to this day none of these investors have ever bothered to contact me or my team directly. To perform their due diligence on their investment — on their investment in me. To ask how I might feel about the new owner of my art. The music I wrote. The videos I created. Photos of me, my handwriting, my album designs. And of course, Scooter never contacted me or my team to discuss it prior to the sale or even when it was announced. I'm fairly certain he knew exactly how I would feel about it though. And let me just say that the definition of the toxic male privilege in our industry is people saying, 'But he's always been nice to me,' when I'm raising valid concerns about artists and their rights to own their music. And of course he's nice to you. If you're in this room, you have something he needs. The fact is that private equity is what enabled this man to think, according to his own social media post, that he could buy me. Yet the most amazing thing was to discover that it would be the women in our industry who would have my back and show me the most vocal support at one of the most difficult times, and I will never, ever forget it. Like, ever.

But to conclude, I will say that in 10 years I've seen forward steps in our industry, in our awareness, our inclusion, our ability to start calling out unfairness and misconduct. I've seen the advent of social media, the way it can boost the breakthrough of emerging artists and I've seen fans become more engaged and supportive than ever before. I've leaned on that support and it has kept me in a place where, no matter what, I always wanted to keep making music for them. I was up on a stage in New York City in 2014 accepting Billboard Woman of the Year and I was

talking about the future of streaming. How we needed to make sure that the female artists, writers, and producers of the next generation were protected and compensated fairly. This was before my record deal with Universal, last year, that would contractually guarantee that the artists on their roster be paid upon any sale of their Spotify shares unrecoupable. So thank you for that.

This speech I'm referring to was on my 25th birthday. My exact quote during the speech was, 'I really just feel like we need to continue to try to offer something to a younger generation of musicians, because somewhere right now your future Woman of the Year is probably sitting in a piano lesson or in a girls' choir "and today right now we need to take care of her.'

I've since learned that at that exact moment, an 11-year-old girl in California really was taking piano lessons and really was in a girls' choir. And this year she has been named Woman of the Year at the age of 17. Her name is Billie.

And those are the stories we need to think about every day as we do our jobs within this industry. The ones where people's dreams come true and they get to create music and play it for people. The ones where fans feel a connection to music that makes their day easier, makes their night more fun, makes their love feel more sacred, or their heartache feel less isolating. The ones where all of you in this room stand as an example for someone else in the next generation who loves the same thing that we love. Music. And no matter what else enters the conversation, we will always bring it back to music. And as for me, lately I've been focusing less on doing what they say I can't do and more on doing whatever the hell I want.

Thank you for a magnificent, happy-free, confused, sometimes lonely but mostly golden decade. I'm honoured to be here tonight. I feel very lucky to be with you, thank you so much.'

THE HOLLYWOOD CIRCUS

BY KHAVA CHILAEVA

This poem is inspired by the idea of a great conspiracy in Hollywood, secrecy that often is a part of a grand narrative in film production. But this time it's in real life, and was uncovered as part of the #MeToo movement in 2017.

The dress is one size too tight and she feels the weight of it,
sinking her feet into the unwelcoming, devilish red carpet.
She knew the Los Angeles sun was merciless, and yet, her heavy sweat,
blends the layers of foundation, so you can hardly tell what's real, and what's
an illusion.

Casting her distorted gaze upon the rest of the company,
she cannot help but gaze,
in something she is sure can't be adoration
at the ringleader of the circus, standing taller,
eyes clear, surveying the scene, as his great magic trick is unveiled.

There are those moments, aren't there?
In a particularly mesmerising show,
Where you trip up, the vision shifts, and blindspots enter the light.

She falls back on a memory, of going to see the circus when she was a child.
A fairground at Marble Arch, or a tent on the common
And seeing the makeup and sweat fall from the face of the acrobats,
the sweat build on the ginormous muscled man, who smoked a cigar round the
back
and laughed too bitterly for comfort.

As she stares up at her ringleader, his gaze glares down at her,
Or is the Los Angeles sun?
Her headache pounds back in full force, her hands shake,
And, she doesn't have to force a smile, she really smiles
At the posters of a bashful girl, blushing and blushing and unready, braced against
the world she entered, filming in California last spring.

Because, after all, she is the grantightly,
It is of course, because she'sd magic trick.
And if she squeezes his hand a little too grateful.

WHAT IS THE JAZZ AGE?

The Jazz Age was a cultural period and movement that took place in America. It started at the end of World War 1 and ended with the Great Depression of 1929. After this, new styles of music and dance emerged, such as flappers, along with other modern ideas. This music style was largely credited to African Americans employing new musical techniques along with traditional African traditions.

The decade known as the Jazz Age was the 1920's, which was also known as the Roaring Twenties.

LOUIS ARMSTRONG,

nicknamed Satchmo, was born in New Orleans on August 4, 1901. Louis was an American jazz trumpeter and singer. He was one of the most influential figures in jazz music. Famous for his innovative methods of playing the trumpet and cornet, he was also a highly talented singer blessed with a powerful, gravelly voice. Louis was also the highest-paid African American entertainer.

His family was very poor, and his father abandoned the family when Louis was young. Louis's mother often had to resort to prostitution to provide for the family. He had to drop out of school in order to work and help his mother so that they could earn enough for the both of them. He started singing in the streets for money and also began working for a Jewish family, the Karnofskys, who treated young Louis as a family member and encouraged his musical talents.

By the late 1910s he had become a popular jazz music player in New Orleans.

However, the Great Depression set in during the late 1920s, and Armstrong's thriving career suffered a setback. The depression caused

WHY WAS THE JAZZ AGE IMPORTANT?

The 1920s is considered the Jazz Age because it was the time when jazz music blossomed and became tremendously popular. It was a 'golden age' for the genre. Jazz music was the music of the younger generation. It was fast, heavily syncopated, and often made up on the spot through improvisation.

The three most famous jazz musicians at that time were Louis Armstrong, Mary Lou Williams and Duke Ellington.

And All that Jazz

RUHI AURORA

several of the prominent clubs where he played to shut down.

He moved to Los Angeles in 1930 and played at the New Cotton Club, which was often visited by celebrities. However, Armstrong returned to Chicago in late 1931. His popularity as a performer reached new heights during the late 1930s.

His 1954 studio release 'Louis Armstrong Plays W. C. Handy' is considered to be one of his masterpieces. It features timeless hits like 'St. Louis Blues', 'Yellow Dog Blues', and many more. The album is described by AllMusic as "essential music for all serious jazz collections".

Armstrong's 1967 single 'What a Wonderful World' was an iconic song that peaked at No.1 in Austria and the U.K. It reached the top ten in several other countries like Denmark, Belgium, Ireland, and Norway.

Additionally, Louis Armstrong was posthumously awarded the Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award in 1972 by the Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences.

Louis passed away due to a heart attack on 6th July 1971, in Corona, New York.

MARY LOU WILLIAMS was born as Mary Elfireda Scruggs in Atlanta, USA on 8th May 1910. Mary was a jazz pianist who performed with and composed for many of the great jazz artists of the 1940s and '50s.

Mary Lou Williams was an African American jazz pianist, composer and arranger. She wrote hundreds of compositions and arrangements and recorded over one hundred records. She was one of eleven children and taught herself to play piano at a very young age, performing her first recital at age ten. Mary became a professional musician at the age of fifteen, when she played with Duke Ellington and the Washingtonians. In 1925, she joined a band led by saxophonist John Williams. Mary then married him in 1927.

Throughout the 1960s Williams focused on religious jazz with recordings like *Black Christ of the Andes*, which was a tribute to the Afro-Peruvian priest St. Martin de Porres.

Williams' career spanned over half a century and she created music full of everlasting beauty, inspiration and surprise. Her achievements as a composer, arranger and bandleader meant that she earned the highest level of respect from her peers. Even today she is, simply, one of our greatest treasures

Mary Lou Williams passed away from bladder cancer in Durham, North Carolina on May 28, 1981, at the age of 71. She left behind a pioneering legacy of jazz music.

DUKE ELLINGTON was born on April 29, 1899. He was raised by two talented, musical parents in a middle-class neighbourhood of Washington D.C. At the age of seven, he began studying piano and earned the nickname "Duke" for his gentlemanly ways. Inspired by his job as a soda jerk, he wrote his first composition, "Soda Fountain Rag," at the age of 15. Despite being awarded an art scholarship to the Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York, Ellington followed his passion for ragtime and began to play professionally at age 17.

At the age of 19, Ellington married Edna Thompson, who had been his girlfriend since high school. Soon after they got married Edna gave birth to their only child, Mercer Kennedy Ellington. Ellington is a major figure in the history of jazz music. His career spanned more than half a century and during this time he composed thousands of songs for the stage, screen and contemporary songbook. He created one of the most distinctive ensemble sounds in Western music and continued to play what he called "American Music" until shortly before his death in 1974.

“music full of
everlasting beauty,
inspiration and
surprise”

Ellington died of lung cancer and pneumonia on May 24, 1974, at the age of 75. His last words were "Music is how I live, why I live and how I will be remembered." More than 12,000 people attended his funeral. He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in the Bronx, New York City.

Overall, the popularization of Jazz music had an enormous cultural effect. Jazz music was important because it influenced fashion, dance, the accepted moral standards, youth culture and race relations. Moreover, during the 1920s, jazz music provided the motivation and opportunity for many women to reach beyond the traditional gender role designated to them by society.

A CENTURY OF FASHION

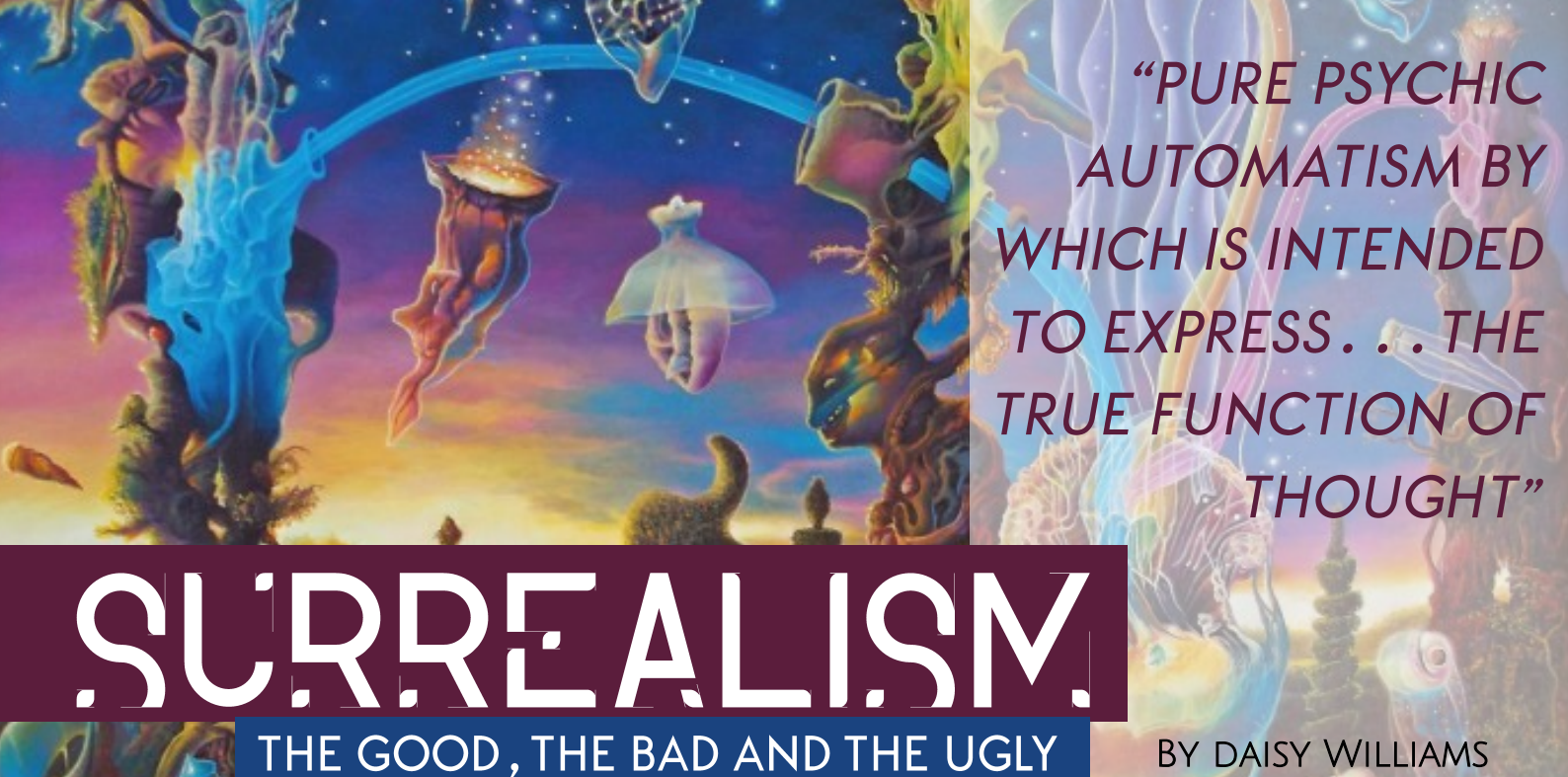
In fourteen drawings
ANNABELLA HUDSON

Looking back over the century we seem to define it in decades, trends in fashion, music, technology and youth culture. As we've come to the end of the 2010s and enter the new decade, we can reflect on the past and how it has influenced us today. We have seen so much change from the impact of wars, to radial music and technology. We can see these transformations mirrored through fashion trends. The rebellious jazz age of the 1920s saw a rise in skirt's hemline to just below the knee and the masculine, utilitarian style of the 1940s reflected the influence of the war effort. We then see the introduction of the mini skirt in the 1960s which

was a symbol of women's liberation. In the 1960s and 70s we also see the hippie movement which rejected traditional values of society and promoted an alternative philosophy. This abandonment of convention was demonstrated in their clothes which were loose and flowy and often had bold floral patterns or tie dye. In the later decades of the century we also see a wider variety of trends as fashion became cheaper and more accessible thanks to the development of manmade fibers and the use of foreign factories. Fashion was also influenced greatly by different music trends.

This can be seen by the disco craze of the 1970s and the neon looks inspired by the dance music of the 1980s. The most recent styles have seen clothing become more casual with grunge trends in the 1990s and the rise of loungewear in the 2000s; the popular juicy couture tracksuits becoming an iconic piece of the decade. The 2010s have seen activewear as the main trend. Dainty floral prints and skater dresses with trainers became in-fashion, shops such as Brandy Melville proving very successful. I have summarized all these trends of the century in fourteen drawings from 1910 to now to show just how much change we have seen and how this has influenced our fashion..





*“PURE PSYCHIC
AUTOMATISM BY
WHICH IS INTENDED
TO EXPRESS...THE
TRUE FUNCTION OF
THOUGHT”*

SURREALISM

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY

BY DAISY WILLIAMS

Taking shape in the early 1920s and continuing throughout the decade, the surrealist art movement functioned as an outlet to express the inner workings of the unconscious mind (not only for artists, but also poets, photographers and authors).

Artists attempted to reject the realist art that featured ordinary depictions of life. In some ways, surrealist paintings are an escape from the everyday, a window into dreams and the imagination. Some onlookers may describe the paintings as uncomfortable, as the artists sought to make their viewers disassociate the image of a painting from normality.

Experts have found it hard to categorise artists or define surrealist style due to the fact that each surrealist used different recurring motifs throughout their paintings. No two artists had the same imagination and method to express it. This is what makes this time period so interesting, as the frequent use of natural imagery contrasts greatly with the strange and sometimes disturbing messages the paintings portray.

It is clear that 1920s surrealism has greatly influenced our current artistic culture – the use of juxtaposition and symbols in art is still very much prevalent. For example, James McCarthy, an American painter, uses surrealist techniques to create psychedelic depictions of space and the afterlife. You can also see it in the current-day photography of Tommy Ingberg and Platon Yurich. Artists and photographers are able to present ideas in a way that ensnares viewers and prompts them to question important aspects of life.

Fortunately, some aspects of the 1920s surrealist movement have not followed us into the 21st century. Arguably pioneered by Andre Breton, a French painter

who described it as, “pure psychic automatism by which is intended to express...the true function of thought,” surrealism was heavily dominated by male figures, such as Salvador Dalí. Even though the female body was a common feature in the paintings of these men, women themselves were seen “simply as muses” (in the words of Eileen Agar) and often associated with mystery or sorcery.

Despite the important creative reform this movement introduced, there also exists an underlying background of misogyny and homophobia; surrealist artists refused to feature male bodies in their paintings in order to prevent what was deemed moral incorrectness, and women were disregarded as anything other than a possession.

Unlike the prominent traces of surrealist influence in modern art, these closeminded ideas of prejudice are not reflected in our modern society, at least not to the extent of the 1920s. Feminism is a strong, alive movement that enables women worldwide to claim equal rights. Many female surrealist artists, such as Rachel Baes, are now being recognised for their impact on the movement and have been given credit where they were once ignored. With gay marriage legalised in 2013 both in the United Kingdom and France, one can argue that the upcoming 2020s will include the best aspects of last century’s art, but not its shameful inequalities.

Nowadays, 21st century art can only be described as a kaleidoscope of colour and media. Artists are free to switch between materials and nearly all forms of expression are accepted. This wave of liberty shows surrealism’s psychological revolution in our approach to viewing art. Art has the ability to reach across linguistic and cultural barriers, and has the potential to radically change mindsets.

Memories of Jay Gatsby

GOVHAR DADASHOVA

(Inspired by F. Scott Fitzgerald's 'The Great Gatsby')

She was dying. Her heart was drumming against her ribcage, as her entire body began to tremble slightly, veined fingers clutching the worn leather couch underneath her. She comprehended the startling realization, like a fragile paper doll submerged into water begins to break away, piece by piece, until it is nothing but a few mere atomic particles. When she contemplated her meeting with Death, she immediately reconciled the ending of her troubled existence with the beginning of a new one. She had never been religious. Instead, she chose to attend the sermons of her favorite vices, indulging in irritating her ex-husband and drinking copious amounts whenever she thought too deeply. It was easier like that. Ever since Gatsby's death, she had beaten her feelings down into a bloody pulp, not knowing if she could survive their resurrection. Quite suddenly, as though apprehending an unusual coldness filtering through the half-open window, she closed her eyes and allowed herself to picture it.

Gatsby enters the patio. His movements are slow and languid, as his slender figure is lit up by the pale sunlight which seems to highlight every contour on his gaunt-looking face. His head is cocked to the side, as dark circles form themselves under blue-gray eyes, with a jaw clenched so tightly, that she cannot help but imagine that he is repressing the desire to scream. He effortlessly discards his creased white shirt to the side, as he plunges headfirst into the water, allowing himself for a brief moment to forget about Daisy. He can still see the sight of Myrtle's hair tangled amongst the reddish brown smeared on the tarmac behind his eyes. He recalled how her eyes had been

shut by the shaking hands of her terrified husband, who had pushed away the hordes of people surrounding his shop, to close them and leave only soot coloured marks behind. It is with these tremulous thoughts, that Gatsby continues to swim, sifting through his thoughts like the morning newspaper, and disregarding the sound of boots to be the loud entrance of the butler. In her imagination, he never hears the firing of the gunshots.

She was dying. In those last moments between the known and the unknown, Daisy Buchanan sat in her small and dingy apartment in Chicago, remembering a younger version of herself, when she had indulged in all the pleasures of being a pretty fool. Money. Family. Popularity. Daisy had held them all in the palm of her hands. Despite this, her fondest memories lay in remembering the blaze of gaudy and glimmering stars which Jay had lit up the sky with for her. The bobbing green light which had seemed to stretch interminably between the two of them. Their first kiss. Their first hello. Their last goodbye.

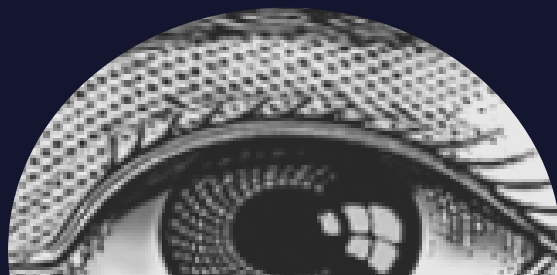
It was with these thoughts, that Daisy Buchanan allowed herself to ...

step into the

darkness.

19 READING LIST

20



POLLY CAMERON

THE GREAT GATSBY

F. Scott Fitzgerald

This novel would be on anyone's 1920s list. It perfectly captures the mood

of the decade: jazz, elaborate parties and wealth. The story is primarily about the mysterious millionaire Jay Gatsby and his obsessive love for former debutante Daisy Buchanan. *The Great Gatsby* deals with an eclectic range of themes from hedonism to social upheaval, combining to create a cautionary tale which warns of the pursuit of the 'American Dream.' The novel is widely considered to be a literary classic and the 'Great American Novel.' One of the reasons I love *The Great Gatsby* so much is the glamour Fitzgerald manages to capture. The lavish writing style matches the contents, engaging the reader in an almost circus-like experience. I would recommend this book to anyone who has a propensity for glitz and glam.

A PASSAGE TO INDIA

E. M. Forster

I haven't actually read this book yet but it's certainly on my list. The novel is set against the backdrop of the British Raj and the independence movement in the 1920s which I find particularly interesting as this is what I'm studying for my History A Level. *A Passage to India* focuses on four characters: Miss Adela Quested, Mrs. Moore, Dr. Aziz and his British friend Mr. Cyril Fielding. During a trip to the (fictitious) Marabar Caves Adela thinks she is alone with Dr. Aziz in one of the caves and panics, fleeing. It is assumed that Dr. Aziz has attempted to assault her and consequently a trial ensues. The novel was selected as one of the 100 great works of 20th century English literature by the Modern Library and won the 1924 James Tait Black Memorial Prize for fiction.

MRS DALLOWAY

Virginia Woolf

This is one of the novels I'm studying for English A Level and I've thoroughly enjoyed reading it. *Mrs. Dalloway* follows Clarissa Dalloway and a host of other characters, including a shellshocked soldier, through the ups and downs of a single day in June 1923. Additionally, the book chronicles life after WW1 and explores its impact. Anyone interested in the war and its aftermath would find the novel a realistic insight into life after the catastrophic event. This seeming ordinary day is given such significance when seen through the characters' eyes which helps Woolf explore the themes of individuality, life and death to a poignant degree.

TO THE Lighthouse

Virginia Woolf

To read any ordinary novel after reading the lighthouse is to feel oneself turning away from the the light of day into the world of puppets and pasteboard.' This was said of the novel by critic and author Bernard Blackstone. Virginia Woolf seems to understand human thought and emotion to a startlingly perceptive degree. You can sense that each choice of word was deliberate and designed to evoke a response from the reader. Set on the Isle of Sky in Scotland, this novel focuses on the Ramsay family and their assorted guests on two separate visits to the lighthouse. Using this seemingly trivial subject matter, Woolf is able to create a moving examination of the tensions of family life and explore the dynamic between men and women.

One of my favourite books is *Brideshead Revisited* by Evelyn Waugh. It is a seemingly innocent story about high society during the interwar period as seen through the eyes of Charles Ryder, only son of a middle-class banker who befriends wealthy Sebastian Flyte. *Brideshead* was published in 1944 and provides an interesting insight into the glamour of England's elite throughout the 20s and 30s whilst also giving a view of the attitude towards homosexuality at that time.

The subject of homosexuality began to rise to prominence in British literature in the 1920s, with books such as *The Well of Loneliness* by Radclyffe Hall (1928), Virginia Woolf's *Orlando* (1928), or her earlier *Mrs Dalloway* (1925). These books show it was an issue of discussion in society, influenced by the modernism that started after the First World War as a rejection of Victorian-era traditions.

Brideshead Revisited shows how Charles Ryder's life is changed when he meets Sebastian Flyte at Oxford. Their lives are entwined for better or worse as Ryder gets to experience the glitzy life of the British upper-classes at the time. The story becomes more complicated as throughout the first half of the novel there is a foreshadowing of troubles to come – the Flytes are a Catholic family.

The second half of the book describes the upper-classes in less revered tones. However, Waugh manages to describe a romantic image of detached, elite life with a sense of longing, yet still keeps a tone of scepticism, cutting through the illusion we have of the 1920s.

One such book which lightly touches on homosexuality is *A Month in the Country* by J L Carr, which is set in North Yorkshire after WWI. Towards the end of the book we discover one of the characters is gay and, while the character remains the same, it's interesting to note the

effect of their sexuality being revealed. It doesn't really add to the plot and yet the author felt it necessary to include. What's also interesting is how, although the protagonist does not see homosexuality negatively or change how he sees his friend, he can't help but feel less connected to him and their friendship dwindles away. It's also important to note that the book was published in 1980 but the 1987 film version does not even feature homosexuality as a theme.

Although homosexuality appears in all these novels, it is either a

THE EVOLUTION OF LGBTQ+ LITERATURE

FLEUR O'REILLY

subtext to be inferred by careful reading or, if it is openly described, it is never specifically named. This is because although the 1920s were a time of prosperity and new found freedoms after WWI, homosexuality remained illegal. One country that was especially liberal in the 1920s was Germany. There was a large LGBT community in Berlin which became a centre for LGBT research. This came to an end with the Great Depression and the following rise in fascism which it provoked.

In Germany, the LGBT community was especially crushed: the Nazis took control and burnt many new books in their famous book burnings. Following the Woolfden report, England decriminalised homosexual acts between two men in 1967 (sexual acts between women were not criminalised as the state believed it would lead to more woman being aware of the possibility). One sad example of the repression of homosexuality is in

Maurice by EM Forster, a book which centres on the life of a gay man and all the people he interacts with. One of the best things about this book is how, unlike in Forster's own life, it does have a happy ending for the protagonist, something rare in the proceeding gay literature I have discussed. Written in 1914, *Maurice* was not published until Forster's death in 1971, as he had grown up in a society which viewed homosexuality with hostility: Oscar Wilde was given a prison sentence for being gay when Forster was only 16.

Since the end of WW2 many, many books have been published featuring homosexuality. One that stands out for me is *A Room in Chelsea Square*, published in 1958 and written by Michael Nelson. And, again, whilst it's never explicitly mentioned, it's fairly obvious it's about a group of gay friends. The book provides an interesting image of homosexual culture in 1950s England, once again mostly amongst the upper class.

One of my modern favourites is *Song of Achilles*, by Madeline Miller, which tells the story of Patroclus and his lover Achilles as they grow up together in the Ancient Greek world of heroes and as they navigate the infamous Trojan War. Some other bestseller gay novels are *Call Me by Your Name* and *A Gentleman's Guide to Vice and Virtue* to name a few. Over the past few years what's been great to see is more and more novels featuring bisexual characters as well as gay ones, eg *All the Invisible Things* by Orlagh Collins, but also to see books which have LGBT characters whose main traits aren't just that they are gay or to read a novel which doesn't have that one storyline.

And so, even if we still have further to go, 100 years on from EM Forster writing *Maurice* and dedicating it "To a happier year", we can look back and see how far we have come.

*this is all exclusive to England

POLITICS OF THE PAST

FLO JARVIS

The 1910s were very key years for the British Labour Party. To understand what happened we need to briefly retreat slightly earlier to 1899.

The Labour Party essentially came about because a number of left-wing organisations decided to sponsor parliamentary candidates that represented their beliefs. In 1899 this idea was proposed by Thomas R. Steels, a member of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. His idea was approved by the Trades Union Congress and a conference was held on the 26th and 27th of February 1900. 129 of the delegates present passed the motion to establish "a distinct Labour group in Parliament, who shall have their own whips..." Now, this was not the formation of the Labour Party; this was the formation of the Labour Representation Committee (LRC), which coordinated attempts to support candidates that represented the working class population. This was crucial, because prior to this there was no funding for such candidates to attempt to earn places in parliament, so the working class had no hope of representation.

In the election of 1900, the LRC only managed to sponsor 15 candidates, but two were successful in winning seats. Keir Hardie became MP for Merthyr Tydfil and Richard Bell for Derby. In the 1906 election, Labour won 27 more seats (bringing their total to 29), helped by a 1903 pact between the Labour Party and the Liberal Party. In order to avoid a divided opposition to the conservatives, the Liberal Party agreed to step down in 30 constituencies to help out Labour candidates. After the 1906 election, the Labour Party was officially named and formed. After more extended collaboration with the Liberal Party in the 1910 election, the Labour Party supported

measures such as the 'Education (Provision of Meals) Act' (1906), the 'Workmen's Compensation Act' (1906), the 'Old Age Pensions Act' (1908), the 'Mines Act' (1908) and the 'National Insurance Act' (1911).

So during the 1910s, the Labour Party was at a key time of growth. One of the youngest parties, the 1910s saw Labour influence grow and key values become established. In the 1910 election Labour won 42 seats. In the 1918 election they won 57. In 1922, Labour won 142 seats, making them the biggest party after the Conservatives (who lost 38 seats in that election).

A key reason for this growth was the decline of the Liberal Party. Although there were Liberal governments from 1908-16 (Asquith) and 1916-22 (Lloyd George), and Lloyd George was treated as a hero of WW1, the party was seeing an overall decline in popularity due to various factors. In my opinion, the main factor for the decline of the Liberal Party was the electoral reforms of 1918, which, as well as allowing some women to vote, caused an increase in young working-class voters. These voters were more likely to support Labour, and the support for the Liberal Party diminished increasingly.

During the 1910s, the Labour Party was most impactful on a municipal level. By 1914 there were around 420 Labour representatives sitting on local councils. This is particularly impressive considering the fact that the first Labour council EVER was in West Ham in only 1898, and they lost their majority there two years later. These local councils pressed most urgently for education, especially the feeding and medical inspection of school children (it was a labour council that first brought about free school meals in Bradford in 1892). They

also pushed for the provision of work for the unemployed, an eight-hour-work-day and for the enforcement of the Fair Wages Clause. They also implemented slum clearance schemes, especially in Glasgow and Birmingham, and fought for the widespread betterment of treatment for the unemployed, elderly and disabled. While there was not a Labour Government in the UK until 1924 (and this was very brief), the progress made in the 1910s cannot be understated.

Whatever your political alignment, I think it's important and very interesting to understand the history of our parties. Many of the measures Labour pressed for in the 1910s were part of themes jarringly potent in the 2010s. Take the measures to provide free school meals. In the 2010s, foodbank use increased by 73% (this figure is specific to the Trussell Trust Network) and over half a million of their food parcels went to children, showing that sufficient nourishment for all children is still a major issue. Or we could take Labour's campaigns to better treatment of disabled people. The charity Scope UK claims that 28% of working age disabled people are living in poverty, a proportion much higher than that of non-disabled people (18%). This reveals that disabled people in the UK are still seriously financially disadvantaged. Furthermore, consider Labour's slum clearance schemes. According to Crisis, core homelessness levels (the average number of homeless people on any given night) have increased by 28% between 2010 and 2017. Of course, it is difficult to ever know if a statistic is completely accurate, and statistics can barely portray the breadth and tragedy of an issue. However, I believe they go some way in highlighting how the Labour Party of the 1910s was fighting for many of the same things it was fighting for in the 2010s.

1947

Kashmir

A POEM BY LAKSHYA RAVIKUMAR,

INTRODUCED BY POLLY CAMERON

Kashmir has been a region with a bloody history ever since 1947. Once a princely state called Jammu and Kashmir, it joined India after the sub-continent was divided up at the end of British rule. Then began the fight between India and Pakistan for control of the area. Territory was divided and a ceasefire line agreed. On the Indian side of the border, there has been violence for decades because of the separatist insurgency against Indian rule.

In August 2019, tension was higher than ever. Thousands of additional Indian troops were deployed and a major Hindu pilgrimage was cancelled. The government since announced that it was revoking nearly all of Article 370, which has been the basis of Kashmir's complex relationship with India for some 70 years. This article is integral to Kashmir's identity as it allowed a certain amount of autonomy: its own constitution, a separate flag and freedom to make laws. Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party had long opposed Article 370 and revoking it was in the party's 2019 election manifesto. Their argument was that to properly integrate Kashmir, the state had to be brought to the same level as the rest of India. Many Kashmiris believe that the BJP wants to change the demographic character of the

Muslim-majority region by allowing non-Kashmiris to buy land there, a move that would be detrimental to the identity of the region.

The most recent news report at the time of my writing stresses the importance of this event as Kashmir has experienced over 150 days of internet shutdown, the longest ever in India. This blackout has severely affected the region's economy. A range of businesses, from IT services to trade are struggling to operate. Colonial-era law, known as section 144, has also been introduced in the region. The law bans gatherings of more than four people to prevent violence or any disruption of law and order. Additionally the state was divided into two federally-administered territories back in October, ruled directly from Delhi. This asymmetrical power balance is crushing Kashmir with no regard for the ordinary people who weren't given a voice. It is an unjust action made by an unchecked government.

Lakshya's poem is beautiful, lamenting the treatment of Kashmir and serves as a cry for understanding the plight of such a historically rich region.

It's a blood stained 1947
When a nation is killed in the womb.

A triple suicide hangs above our heads whilst
the earth splits and
the dead rise to sit tall on God's shoulders.

A whole nation is slipping through
Oil black skies,
dissolving in rain, hitting
armour like an orchestra of bullets.

Laughing in the midst of two armies
Is a charioteer.
He is drowning in the war cries of man and
Humanity is a puddle of crimson sin
at his feet.
He is laughing wild and tender and loud,
still stuck in the Iron Age.

Cry me the Indus River and guide me through Kashmir blind,
Tell me stories of how a nation was slammed against a wall,
Her entrails left behind for vultures.

Take these hungry hands of mine and
Feed me the wreckage she is known for.

Yes, she tastes like home.

A war is rotting inside our bellies,
It's branches wrapping around your gut, snaking through your veins.
Your children are seeds and all you can do is watch
As they make the same mistakes.

Your breath is as cold as a gun to the temple,
Bruises the colour of her frozen lakes
Tint your skin indigo and
Here's the tragedy,
You are drowning with each other.

1947 *Kashmir*

BY LAKSHYA RAVIKUMAR

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A STUDY IN PURPLE

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