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The Pacific Sentinel, January 2019

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the Pacific Sentinel



And a Trashy New Year!

Our annual festivities generate literal tons of garbage

2018 in Music

Trends and favorites from the year

First Confirmed Evidence of Dinosaurs in Oregon

LGBTQ Activism in Uganda

What's Your Face Shape?

Pear? Diamond? Oblong?

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Cover: editorial staff collaboration shot by Zell Thomas

Back cover: no seriously, what are you waiting for? Apply today! Ad by Zell Thomas

WHO WE ARE

The Pacific Sentinel is a monthly student-run magazine at PSU. We seek to uplift student voices and advocate on behalf of the marginalized. We analyze culture, politics, and daily life to continually take the dialogue further.

Editorial Staff: Executive Editor Jake Johnson, News Editor Margo Craig, Opinions Editor Daniel J. Nickolas, and Arts and Culture Editor Shane Johnson

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illustration by Josh Gates

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Happy New Year From Times Square

Environmental impacts of the celebration

by Jesse Trott and Margo Craig
photo illustrations by Jake Johnson

On December 31st, people around the world celebrate the end of one year to ring in the next. The Times Square ball drop in New York City is the signature New Year's Eve celebration in the United States. The Big Apple celebration dates back to 1904, and has since evolved to include big name celebrities, live performances, thousands of attendees, millions of viewers, and, the traditional bells and whistles: fireworks, glitter, confetti, tinsel, and so on. The celebration comes with environmental costs.



Right before the clock strikes midnight and the ball drops, the city releases 3,000 pounds (1.5 tons) of confetti over Times Square. Confetti became part of the tradition in 1992, in an effort to make the celebration more of a spectacle and less of a drunken brawl. While the confetti is biodegradable, made from recycled material, once it's freed, it swirls everywhere. The heat from the crowd pushes confetti above the skyscrapers. Wind carries confetti throughout the island metropolis. In Times Square, it gets mixed with the rest of celebratory garbage, which has topped out at a whopping 50 tons of total waste in recent years. Confetti, party hats, streamers, food containers, cigarette butts, novelty glasses; how does

the city deal with all this garbage?

Clean-up begins as soon as the ball drops. An army of nearly 300 sanitation workers equipped with mechanical brooms, backpack blowers, brooms, and garbage trucks work through the night and miraculously finish within 12–16 hours.

Glitter is a staple feature for the holiday season. It's also impossible to trace how much escapes into the environment, adding to our well-established plastic crisis. The microplastic debris does a lot of ecological damage to marine life. Some cosmetic companies are replacing plastic glitter with synthetic mica and mineral glitter with using starch-based lusters. Some scientists are calling for a ban on plastic glitter but when it comes to the shimmering party favor, plastic glitters are still the norm.



Pollution aside, another form of debris to consider is human waste. Times Square revelers begin to assemble in the viewing pen over 12 hours before the ball drops. There are no bathrooms or porta-potties in the viewing pen. Some resort to adult diapers. Forget sorting the recycling out of the garbage, many revelers are doing their business on the street. This waste, like most garbage in New York City, must get loaded on a barge or train for a long journey—up to 600 miles—to get dumped in a landfill.

Another New Year's spectacle in many cities is a fireworks show. From Central Park to Times Square to the Brooklyn Bridge to Prospect Park, midnight fireworks illuminate the sky all over New York City. The

dazzling display releases a toxic medley of chemicals and particulates into the air. Fireworks are also linked to increased levels of magnesium, and greenhouse gasses like nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide in the air.



This year, Germany's Federal Environment Agency released a statement urging people not to use fireworks on New Year's Eve, which, the agency chief told *The Rheinische Post*, create 4,500 tons of fine dust particulates in the air, corresponding "to about 15.5 percent of the particulate matter emitted by road traffic each year." Critics say the small particulates in high concentration are bad for health and exacerbate respiratory conditions. Furthermore, fireworks with their bright lights, loud bangs and shrill whistles disorient and scare animals. Fireworks cause birds to flee en masse. Offspring can be left to die in abandoned nests. In 2017, the Galapagos Islands banned all New Year's Eve fireworks to protect wildlife. India banned fireworks in Delhi because of the thick smog caused by Diwali fireworks.

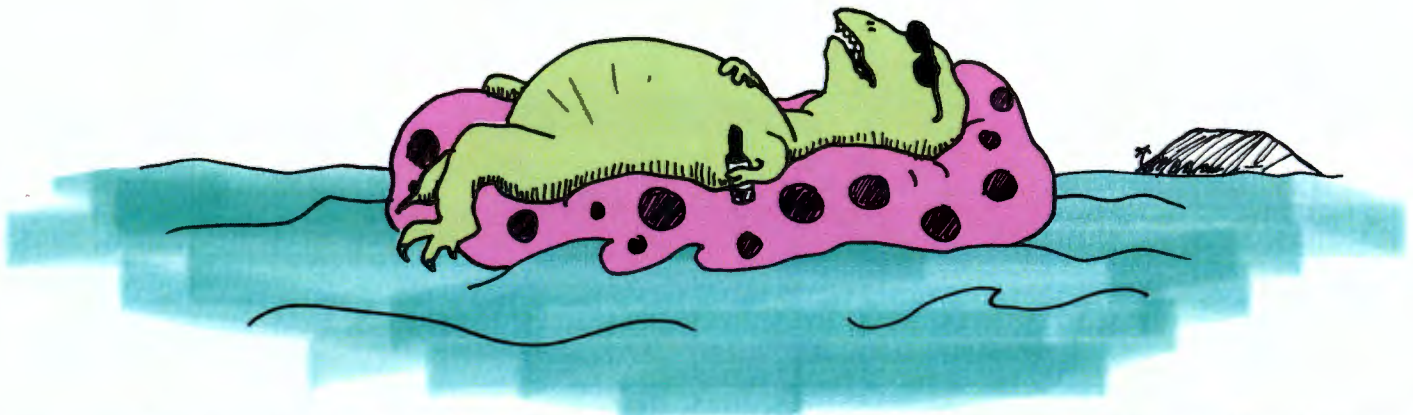
In the Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington areas, fireworks are seeing increased regulation and restriction. How will our celebratory traditions adapt to increasing needs for change as we begin to understand the scope of the impact these traditions have had? Fake Christmas trees? Silent laser and video projection based alternatives to fireworks displays? We will definitely celebrate, but how?



FIRST CONFIRMED EVIDENCE OF DINOSAURS IN OREGON

by Amy Seufert

illustrations by Josh Gates



Imagine wandering through central Oregon 100 million years ago. You look to the West, expecting to see more land, but suddenly realize you are standing at the edge of the continent. Redwoods riddle the coastline, and the wind scatters their needles out to sea. As you walk down to the rocky beach, you imagine the kinds of creatures you might find in the ocean—beautiful spiral-shaped ammonites, snails, fish, and mollusks. Unfamiliar reptiles and dinosaurs roam around.

Such was the landscape for the Mitchell **ornithopod**, the first confirmed non-avian dinosaur found in Oregon. (Technically, the term “**dinosaur**” refers to extinct terrestrial reptiles, and does not include marine life.) Its fossilized toe bone, specifically the third phalanx of the central digit of the right hindlimb foot, was discovered in Mitchell, Oregon in 2015. Dr. Gregory Retallack (pronounced like “metallic”), a researcher with the University of Oregon, stumbled upon the toe bone while with his students on an annual field trip to the **Hudspeth**

Shale, a mid-Cretaceous rock formation in Oregon that showcases geologic history between 65 and 145 million years old. No excavation was required—Retallack simply found the toe bone resting on the ground and immediately knew it was different from the various marine fossils scattered nearby.

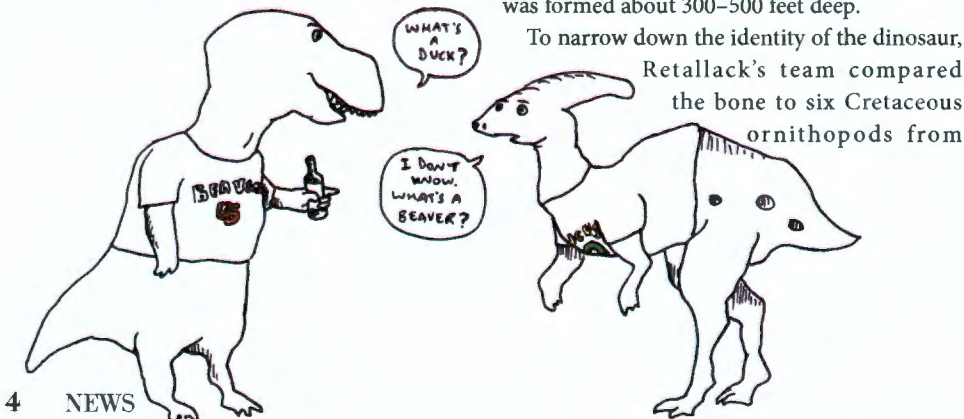
Scientists believe that most of Oregon was underwater during the **Cretaceous period**, so marine fossils are common in the Hudspeth Shale formation. The Mitchell ornithopod discovery suggests that dinosaurs lived here, too. Given the toe fossil’s proximity to a horde of marine fossils, Retallack believes the dinosaur got there via the “bloat and float” theory, which proposes the animal died on shore, filled with gas from decomposition, got picked up by the tide and floated out to deeper waters. According to Retallack, “bones can be preserved almost anywhere, unless it’s an acidic environment.” Due to distinct features found within the shale, Retallack and his team reasoned that the fossil was formed about 300–500 feet deep.

To narrow down the identity of the dinosaur, Retallack’s team compared the bone to six Cretaceous ornithopods from

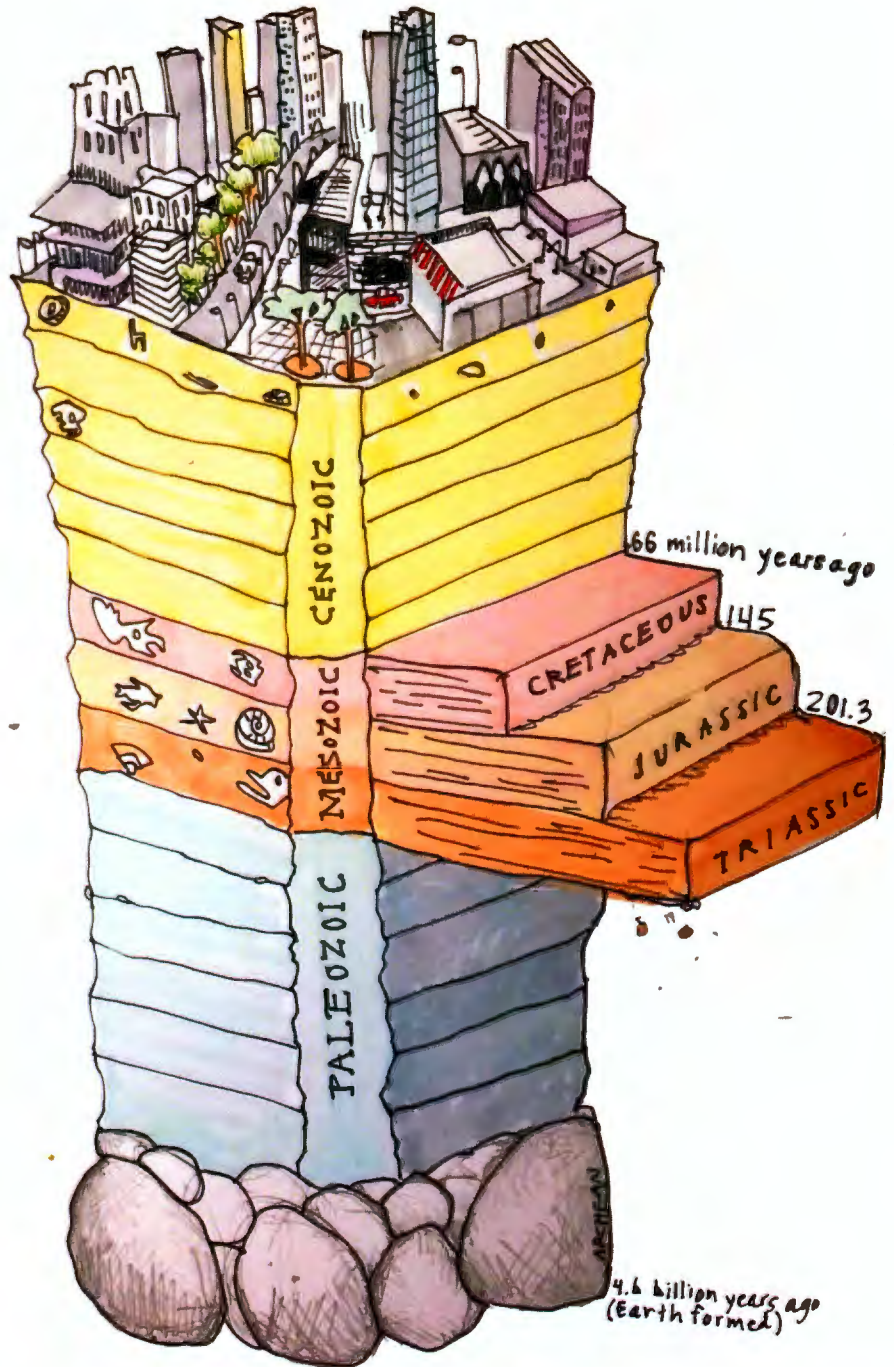
complete skeletons, and found that it resembles two different dinosaurs found within the same geologic layer and time period: an early Cretaceous ornithopod fossil of California and a late Cretaceous theropod of Washington. Retallack visited museums all over the country to study ornithopod feet. He calls it the “summer of the foot fetish.”

Retallack and his team knew the bone was generally weight bearing, and likely part of the hindlimb of a bipedal organism. The absence of collateral pits on either side of the bone are a characteristic of most dinosaurs. The size narrowed it down to a Hadrosaur or an Iguanodont. They found that it resembled the bones of “Leonardo,” a late Cretaceous hadrosaur discovered in Montana nearly two decades ago. They inferred from Leonardo that the Mitchell ornithopod was 17 feet long and weighed 1,500 pounds. Retallack thinks it is likely a new species of dinosaur, but needs more bones to name it. “It’s kind of foolish to name a new species on a toe bone,” as Retallack put it. “Until we find a skull or a tooth of this Mitchell ornithopod, we won’t have a clear idea of what it is.”

Although the toe bone, of the Mitchell ornithopod is the first confirmed dinosaur bone found in Oregon, it is not the first dinosaur bone found in Oregon. The Mitchell ornithopod find was published in a peer-reviewed journal, *The Journal of Vertebrate Paleontology*, merely weeks before another article describing a duck-billed dinosaur sacrum was published. This dinosaur



GEOLOGIC ERAS



died about 20 million years before the Mitchell ornithopod. In the 1960's, the U.S. Geological Survey discovered the sacrum fossil at Cape Sebastian. Former UO researcher, Dave Taylor, led a crew to excavate in 1994, and only recently got around to preparing the fossil for the peer-review process.

For the first time, we're learning how dinosaurs are part of Oregon's history. Thanks to dedicated paleontologists, we can imagine what life was like millions of years before humans evolved. The Mitchell ornithopod is currently on display at the Museum of Natural and Cultural History in Eugene, Oregon. Taylor intends to exhibit the hadrosaur sacrum in Portland later this year.

The Mitchnell Ornithopod dinosaur toe bone that was recently discovered dates back to the most recent period of the Mesozoic Era, the Cretaceous period. While Cretaceous fossils are common at the Hudspeth Shale Formation, the majority of fossils are of marine life, not of dinosaurs.
 infographic by Margo Craig

Ornithopod: A dinosaur in the suborder Ornithopoda, all of which eat only plants and most of which are bipedal.

Dinosaur: Ancient terrestrial reptiles, does not refer to marine-dwelling creatures.

Hudspeth Shale: A geologic formation in Oregon portraying the Mesozoic era, which includes the Cretaceous period.

Cretaceous Period: Time period between 145–66 million years ago within Mesozoic Era.

Mesozoic: Geologic era between 252–66 million years ago, includes the more specific time periods: Cretaceous, Jurassic, and Triassic.



Reduced Bus Fare for Low-Income Individuals

by Cory Elia

illustration by Margo Craig

For students, finances can be a headache, especially when it comes to bus fare. Luckily, TriMet started a new program for “low-income” riders to help with the cost of transportation. Until recently, those that qualified for reduced fares, or “Honored Citizen” fares, were seniors 65 and older, medicare beneficiaries, and riders with disabilities. TriMet now recognizes low-income individuals as Honored Citizen riders.

What else is out there?

PSU offers a pass (in the form of a sticker on your student ID) for the three months of one term that will run you back around \$180. A typical TriMet monthly pass costs \$100. The new low-income program is meant to reduce the monthly cost of a TriMet pass. Instead, people receive a personalized Honored Citizen Hop pass, which reduces fare by at least 50 percent.

What you pay

For those that qualify, a single two-and-a-half hour bus fare costs \$1.25 (instead of \$2.50), an all-day pass costs \$2.50 (instead of \$5), and after spending \$28 within a calendar month, the rest of the rides are free. If a rider has preloaded a pass with \$28 but doesn't use it up by the end of the month, the amount left over on the Hop pass will roll over to the next month. Riders can load money to their Hop card at grocery stores, on the internet, over the phone or using an app.

Who qualifies for this program?

You automatically qualify for the program if you are between 18–64 years old; are not already considered an TriMet honored citizen; are a resident of Oregon; and are either currently enrolled in a state and/or federal benefits or assistance program (such as EBT, OHP, SSI), or make less than twice the federal poverty level of \$24,000 annual income.

What do you need?

Applicants need proof of enrollment in one of the eligible benefits programs (i.e. an Oregon Health identification card for those on OHP), proof of income, and a government-issued identification.

When/where can you get one?

An easy way on campus is to go to PSU's Transportation and Parking Services office, January 3–4 and January 7–11, where TriMet will be hosting low-income fare enrollment from 9 a.m.–5 p.m.

According to the TriMet website, they host enrollment events in the area regularly and post their dates on a Facebook page. Other locations include the WorkSource and IRCO centers around Portland. To find out more about this program, the documents you'll need for enrollment, or to find other locations near you to apply at for the program check out trimet.org/lowincome.

Sample of locations open Monday through Friday 8 a.m.–5 p.m.

SE Works at 7916 SE Foster Rd

Worksource Gresham at 19421 SE Stark st.

Worksource Metro Central at 30 N. Webster St.

Worksource PCC Willow Creek Center at 241 SW Edgewater St.



Kenton Women's Village open house in June, 2017.

Village Model Design Exhibit

by Cory Elia

photo by Jake Johnson

Students from PSU's School of Architecture and Center for Public Interest Design, in conjunction with Portland's Village Coalition, hosted an exhibit reception in Portland's City Hall atrium to showcase village model design work meant to address houselessness. The exhibit was free and open to the public from December 3rd through December 7th, 2018. It featured research, design, and action related to the villages and their ever-present changing role in our city.

The Village Model Design exhibit showcased work conducted by students in Professor Todd Ferry's class this term. For three years, Professor Todd Ferry has taught a fall-term architecture class that focuses on research, design and construction of pod homes for village models. Some villages that already exist in the area, such as the Kenton Women's Village, Clackamas' Veterans Village, and Agape Village, were featured examples that showcased this potential approach to address the region's houselessness crisis.

Several displays pitched fictional scenarios developed by the design class, along with information about villages that are open and inhabited. For example: "What if a village improved the quality of its neighborhood?" This could be as simple as holding community events, litter clean-ups, providing community gardening spaces, or acting as a food hub.

Planned updates for existing villages.

The Kenton Women's Village, which houses up to 14 female-identified people, will be moved this February to land that has a water main running through, making the location better suited for a pod village than a large development. A long-planned, low-income, affordable housing development run by Transition Projects will take its place.

Hazelnut Grove is one of the largest villages in the area. It was founded in September 2015 by a group of advocates and started out as a small group of campers. Most of the original campers from Hazelnut Grove have moved into permanent housing, some of them while working and pursuing an education. The City of Portland has plans to move Hazelnut Grove to St. John's in April 2019.

Church properties are potential sites for pod villages.

One question students posed was: "What if every Portland religious institution contributed to a village?" In the City of Portland, there are 283 religious institutions. Portland Zoning Code allows religious institutions to host six transitional housing units on their property for up to 180 days. However, a conditional use permit could grant a religious institution capacity to

offer more units for longer periods of time.

Another scenario read: "What if the Grotto hosted a Village?" The Grotto, also known as The National Sanctuary of Our Sorrowful Mother, is 62-acres of land owned by the Catholic Church. Given its size and relatively flat surface, the Grotto could house around 20 sleeping pods. A village there would not only give inhabitants shelter, but access to basic human needs such as toilets, showers, and electricity.

Ferry's class helped to create a front gate for Agape Village, which is in construction on property owned by Portland Central Nazarene Church, located at the base of Kelly Butte Point on the corner of SE 97th and Powell Boulevard. The area used to be a quarry, and the church would throw the occasional summertime youth cookout there. Now, the church's ultimate goal for the space is to "create a village which involves the entire community in giving our neighbors a hand-up." Agape Village will have a total of 15 sleeping pods. These pods are being built by a non-profit known as Cascadia Clusters. Additionally, Cascadia Clusters will have several groups of volunteers assisting them. Some of these groups will include inhabitants of the village, who will be paid and get some construction training.

Other features?

"Maker Village" was a particularly innovative aspect of the exhibit. Maker Village, managed by the Cascadia Clusters nonprofit, will house builders and provide an onsite tool shop during Agape Village construction. Once Agape Village is completed, Maker Village will be moved to another village construction site in the city.

The power of design

Ferry's favorite part about teaching students to make the pod homes is the applicability of design. "When students can understand that design is this incredible tool that doesn't just have to be dedicated to museums and jewels that primarily wealthy people get to experience," Ferry said, "but really, [design] is something that can be transformative for underserved communities." Ferry believes his students work can help solve the regional housing crisis: "The more opportunities we have to look at a problem from many different ways, the better."



Yellow Vest Protest of PDX

by Margo Craig and Cory Elia
photos by Margo Craig and Cory Elia

On December 15th, a dozen protesters assembled on the SW corner of Pioneer Courthouse Square in a show of solidarity with the yellow vest protesters that have filled the streets of France each weekend since November 17th. The Facebook event for Portland's yellow vest protest read: "End austerity in Portland! Tax the rich & corporations to fund housing for all, subsidized child care, tuition-free college & healthcare for all and other universal public services... In solidarity with the working class people in France and around the world. Demand an end to neoliberal austerity and create a better world starting right here at home." Several protesters in black bloc attire joined; a couple wore yellow vests over their all-black attire, but declined to comment. "Every yellow safety vest is a symbol of the working class," said one protester, as another ripped the plastic packaging off a fresh vest. "This is not a partisan issue," he continued. "It's a class conflict, whether you are left or right, you are working class."

This was not the only event planned for Pioneer Square that Saturday, two weeks before Christmas. The protesters gathered and prepared signs amidst a flurry of festive activity. "The marching band here is a little bit of an unfortunate coincidence," said a protester, referring to the "Holidays on the Mall" event sponsored by Portland Mall Management, Inc. and Pioneer Courthouse Square.

Down in the main square next to a 75-foot-tall Christmas tree, The Beat Goes On Marching

Band performed alongside The Sugarplum Elves.

The Dickens Carolers in mid-19th century garb rounded the perimeter. "We've been hired by Pioneer Courthouse Square to spread cheer and get pictures taken," said one cheerful caroler, before the quartet erupted into an acapella rendition of "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing."

A swarm of people clad in orange stood by the carts next to the yellow vest protesters. "We're doing a scavenger hunt!" a young woman explained, "You'll see people wearing orange bandanas and stuff... it's all over Portland."

Over in France, crowds of up to 60,000 people come out each weekend for the yellow vest protests over the last two months.. Largely organized over the internet, the yellow vest movement has no distinct leader, but the expanse display of civil unrest carries on. It's named for a simple but striking uniform—the yellow vest—which all French motorists are required to carry in their vehicles. The protest began in rural areas, where people who drive long distances daily were slated to be hit hard by a planned green fuel tax. Protesters in yellow safety vests blocked roads, and word quickly spread across the country. Thousands of workers, members of the middle class, demonstrate each weekend. The protest has brought out professional vandals called casseurs from the ultra-left and ultra-right. They've overturned cars, set cars on fire, broken windows, torn down railings, and vandalized monuments. Eight people have died, most of them in the countryside. The demands of the

nationwide protest are hard to pin down, but most appear to be unified in frustration with declining living standards and the president. Many view Macron as a president for the wealthy, because of recent reforms to loosen labor laws and provide tax-cuts for the rich.

Given the nature of the yellow vest movement, when it comes to unity, the yellow safety vest is the shiny glue. Streets fill with people clad in neon yellow, which pops in contrast to the urban surroundings on bleak winter days. The yellow-vest-effect is optic unity.

But here in Portland, on December 15th in Pioneer Square, the yellow-vest-effect was less clear: Many safety-vested people in the area were not part of the protest.

A man across the street sat in a fold-out chair, counting pedestrians with a tally-counter. He wore a yellow safety vest "because I'm working and they make us wear it." He emphasized that he was not part of the yellow vest protest. "It's an anarchist thing and that's not me."

Nearby, several people wore red safety vests while fundraising on behalf of the Save the Children's Fund. "I don't know what a yellow vest protest is," said one fundraiser, "We are literally just getting people to write letters to kids."

A man standing by the adjacent Max station also wore a yellow safety vest. "For safety reasons, because I'm blind. And it's for traffic so cars can see me when I cross the street."

Up the block, four construction workers wearing yellow safety vests walked along



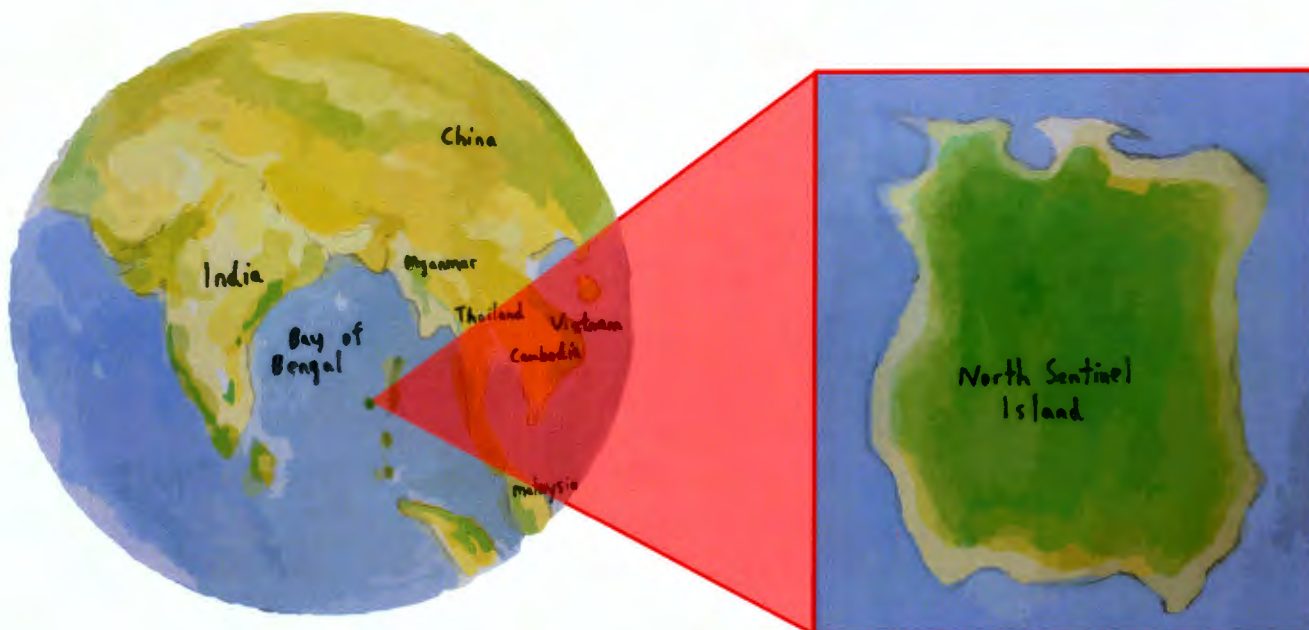
scaffolding as they spoke to each other in Spanish.

Several garbage collectors wore yellow safety vests as they pushed large carts of cleaning supplies around Pioneer Square. "Picking up garbage, removing graffiti, being safe, picking up glass," a collector said about his job's tasks for the day. Protesting anything? "No. I'm just working." The yellow vest? "So I don't get run over by a car or a bus."

Even the police patrollers wore yellow. "This is my patrol uniform, it has been for many years. We're just doing patrol," one said as he glided away on his bicycle.

The yellow vest protesters abandoned Pioneer Square and marched on, undeterred, in single-file line to Waterfront Park, where they held their signs up to traffic and pedestrians passing by. They ended up on the west side of the Naito intersection, flanked by Saturday Market crowds waiting to cross the street. A saxophonist drowned out the protesters' chants with "Play that Funky Music, White Boy." Sometimes, the saxophonist would chime in ironically. "Solidarity!" shouted the protesters. "Spaghetti!" the saxophonist said. "Tax the Rich! House the houseless!" yelled the protesters. "Eat chicken!" the saxophonist hollered back with glee.





The Sentinelese and John Allen Chau

by Jesse Trott

illustration by Jon Bordas

Imagine living in a world without technology or a grocery store, and on a diet of coconuts and fish.

That is exactly how the Sentinelese live on North Sentinel Island in the Pacific Ocean. The Sentinelese have spent the last 60,000 years living the same way, without exposure or influence from the modern world that the island. What we know about the islanders is from fishermen from surrounding islands and the Coast Guard flying over. Until recently, not many in the United States knew much about the Sentinelese. Then a young American missionary by the name of John Allen Chau was killed and buried in the sand by the Sentinelese shortly after arriving on the island.

North Sentinel Island is part of India's Southeastern Andaman and Nicobar Islands, situated between India and Myanmar. These islands are protected by the Indian Government, which means that visiting these islands is prohibited—in fact, it is illegal to go within five kilometers of the shores. The island is a little less than 24 square miles, which is six times smaller than the City of Portland. People believe the Sentinelese are hunters and gatherers since there are no signs of agriculture. They eat sea turtles and seabirds. In the last 15 years, the Sentinelese have killed three people that came onto the island. It appears the Sentinelese are territorial

and do not want any contact with people from the outside world.

In 2006, a boat carrying two Indian fishermen drifted to the shores of North Sentinel Island overnight. The Sentinelese killed and buried both men. When the Indian Coast Guard flew over the island to investigate, as they attempted to land their helicopter on the beach, sand blew away to reveal two bodies chopped in many pieces, buried in shallow graves. Previous to these events it was presumed that the Sentinelese were cannibals, but this event made that seem unlikely. The Sentinelese shot arrows at the helicopter, so they never landed on the beach. This incident did not seem to receive the same broad coverage as the second, and most recent case involving the death of John Allen Chau.

Chau was a Christian missionary, spreading the word of God around the globe on behalf of an organization called All Nations. Chau went to a private high school in Vancouver, Washington and was working as a guide for students at Reed College on backpacking trips to Mount Adams. According to his Instagram, he had done missionary work in South Africa, British Columbia, India, and all over the Pacific Northwest before he decided to travel to North Sentinel Island.

Chau spent many years preparing to go to North Sentinel Island. He learned emergency

medicine, how to scuba dive and kayak, while intensely studying the tribe so he would be as informed as possible when he arrived. He was killed by the Sentinelese on November 15, 2018, after hitching a ride with local fishermen close to the island and then kayaking the rest of the way. The Sentinelese shot Chau with arrows after he spent three days on or near the island trying to communicate with them. Local fishermen reported that Chau was buried on the beach, the same way the Indian fishermen had been 12 years earlier.

The Indian government officials say that John Allen Chau broke the law by traveling onto North Sentinel Island. They have been investigating what actually occurred on the island and have arrested the fishermen that helped Chau reach the island.

Since the Sentinelese have lived in isolation from the rest of the world for such a long period of time, Chau's arrival on the island brought a lot of health concerns: Any contact could introduce communicable diseases. The consequences could be fatal. A good example of this occurred at Jamestown in 1607, when over half of the colonists did not survive their first winter in Virginia because of native illnesses they were introduced to. This could potentially mean the end of one of the last truly isolated tribes in the world.

The Heat Is on the Catholic Church

What's a bishop to do?

by Margo Craig illustration by Jon Bordas

Last month, *The Pacific Sentinel* reported that the Pennsylvania attorney general's office released a grand jury report that detailed decades of accounts of abuse sustained by over a thousand people at the hands of hundreds of Catholic priests. Since the report was released in August 2018, more than a dozen states have begun to conduct similar investigations. *The New York Times* reported "the Vatican instructed American bishops last month to wait on taking any collective action until the new year," but some bishops have instead chosen to voluntarily release names of priests in their dioceses who were "credibly accused of abuse." Terry McKiernan, co-director and president of BishopAccountability.org, told *The New York Times* that more than 35 dioceses have released or updated lists of names since August. The numbers reported are unprecedented, and nearly double the number

of bishops accused of abuse since the first report was released in 2002 by the Diocese of Tucson. Like the Pennsylvania report, many of the priests named are dead, and many cases date back generations. But, many names are new, and a few are still alive. However, some victims are distrustful, and say that names are missing. *The New York Times* article notes that few of the lists include details such as when the allegations occurred or how many victims there are. Given the church's reputation for obfuscation, lies, and coverup when it comes to sexual abuse, many feel that subpoena power of state and federal attorney general investigations are the only way to uncover the truth. A federal investigation into the Catholic Church's handling of sexual abuse cases is underway, but the breadth of its scope is unknown.



Fatal CPSO Thanksgiving Encounter Update: Richard Barry died from a drug-related complications

by Margo Craig illustration by Margo Craig

On Monday, December 10th, the Multnomah County medical examiner released the results of the autopsy, and determined that Richard Barry died from acute methamphetamine and cocaine toxicity. Since the death is ruled an accident, and therefore unrelated to officer involvement, the full medical report will not be released.

The six officers involved were placed on paid leave pending the investigation. Four days after the incident, Portland State University sent out a mass email stating the university is conducting a separate internal review as well. There have been no further updates regarding either investigation.

OPB reported that public records indicate Barry lived in a NW Portland apartment in a building overseen by Central City Concern. The nonprofit operates programs that offer affordable housing to people recovering from addiction, people who suffer from mental illnesses, individuals recovering from

hospitalization, recently reunited families, and people recently employed.

According to the *Statesman Journal*, in 2016, meth contributed to more deaths than heroin in Oregon. However, there is a discrepancy between numbers of drug-related deaths reported by the Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and the medical examiner's office, the two authorities tend to come to different conclusions given "the subjective nature of determining what constitutes a 'meth-related' death." OHA reported 141 meth-related deaths in 2016, while the medical examiner's office reported 232.

Most cases of meth toxicity can be managed supportively and typically involve controlling psychiatric agitation, treating hypertension or hypotension, hyperthermia, and metabolic and electrolyte abnormalities. Severe overdoses can present meth-induced seizure activity and heart arrhythmias.



After the Sixth Day

Human genetic engineering and our future

by Van Vanderwall

illustrations by Margo Craig

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them... And the evening and morning were the sixth day.” —Genesis 1:27-31

He Jiankui, a researcher in human genetics at China’s Southern University of Science and Technology, made a bold announcement at a November 28th, 2018 conference in Hong Kong. Dr. He claimed that his team had successfully used the CRISPR gene editing technique on twin human fetuses to bestow HIV resistance on them.

Performing this research without oversight broke with all preceding norms and ethical conventions. Whereas all human genome editing research entails destroying fetuses before viability, the Chinese team claims to have brought the twins to term. Dr. He also announced that an unidentified woman is currently carrying another genetically modified fetus to term.

Ethicists and researchers almost universally inveighed against He’s sidestepping of safeguards and peer review. The Director of Oregon Health and Science University’s Center for Embryonic Cell and Gene Therapy Dr. Shoukhrat Mitalipov made available a public statement calling the Chinese study’s outcome unpredictable and its methods lacking in rigor. A much-publicized remark by Professor Julian Savulescu of the University of Oxford characterized He’s gene editing experiment as “monstrous.” Such emotional language reveals not only anger at researchers for flouting ethics agreements, but revulsion with the children born of the experiment.

Many opinion pieces published in the immediate wake of the announcement of late November focus on *Gattaca*-style scenarios and so-called “designer babies”—the use of the gene-editing technology to create a child catered to the parents’ desires. What about the inverse? If genetically-modified humans become commonplace—as has already occurred for some commercially grown crops and animals raised for slaughter—will the first few “generations” be considered monsters as Dr. Savulescu’s comment implies?

To better understand questions of this scope,

I turned to our wisdom traditions. Rabbi Michael Cahana of Congregation Beth Israel, a Northwest Portland synagogue in the Jewish Reform Movement, specializes in the interface of religion and technology and has served on committees in this field. “We have to think about the implications of the technology that’s going to have multiple generations of reality and pushes the definitions of what is human,” Cahana said. Cahana said he interprets Jewish scripture as permitting gene editing of plants and animals when utilized for the production of food, comparing this to the Green Revolution agricultural advances of the 1950s and 1960s.

Genetically engineering humans is a different matter. Cahana points to the Genesis 1:26–27 account of God creating man in his image as the core of how to understand human gene editing in a scriptural context. Being created in God’s image “can’t be a physical thing,” Cahana said. “It has something to do with our being different from animals. It is about a kind of eternity and a commonality, that we are all created in God’s image, not that some people are created in God’s image. It’s all human beings. When we start to redefine what it means to be a human being, we get into a real problem. Is this person in God’s image or not? We want to have a commonality of human beings and not create a separate species.” He was hopeful, however, that future gene editing research could address heritable and incurable diseases such as Tay-Sachs.

After further meditation, my own inclinations led me to a state of much greater skepticism over technology and so-called progress. Soto Zen priest and teacher Kodo Sawaki urged us not to “forget that modern scientific culture has developed on the basis of our lowest consciousness.” Our continued, unfounded faith that the next technological development will solve old problems without creating new ones is at the very root of the push for gene editing, as well as industries and societal trends (such as so-called smartphones and social networking) beyond the scope of this article. “Advancement is the talk of the world,” said Sawaki Roshi, “but in what direction are we advancing?”

Let us attempt to comprehend human genetic engineering in light of a past technology, once



radical but now well-entrenched: the automobile powered by an internal combustion engine. When this technology was first introduced, advocates promised a less physically grueling and more efficient future. Lo and behold, the technology came with an appetite of its own; the very landscape has been hacked, flattened and paved to make smooth the way for the parking and driving of these contraptions. Did anyone foresee global warming? Did early innovators and technologists foresee global conflict for access to fossil fuels? What about the immense amount of time and money individual people spend on everything from trying to find parking to purchasing and maintaining a vehicle to sitting alone in traffic on smoke-choked roads amidst a crowd of others doing the same? Nobody foresaw such problems until their effects were so widespread and commonplace as to go unnoticed.

There are old clichés about some things cutting both ways and being mixed blessings; every blessing is mixed and everything cuts not just both, but in all ways. Not even the greatest thinkers predicted the ramifications of internal combustion engines, and the same applies now to genetic engineering of humans (and any organism for that matter). Perhaps altering the genetic code, even for ostensibly benign purposes, such as addressing inherited diseases, affects other less easily measured traits such as the ability to empathize with others, fall in love, or have a sense of humor. Whatever changes are wrought by human genetic engineering will forever become part of the gene pool; there is no closing this box after opening it.

What role will corporations and governments play in genetically modifying humans? Monsanto, now a subsidiary of Bayer, copyrighted their genetically modified soybean and corn strains in the 1990s; the company has sued farmers for patent infringement and theft of intellectual property for not paying a licensing fee to grow said strains. Would genetically modified humans constitute an invention, for which someone holds a patent? Would courts rule then that people are inventions or intellectual property also constitute property, and are therefore a valuable living asset like a racehorse or purebred dog? Would this give rise to legal international trade of modified (or unmodified) humans?

Whether laws forbid designer babies or not, the very existence of the technology in the

presence of a desire for perfect children will necessitate this as a phenomenon. Will enhanced people be “better”? As Cahana asked, what makes a better human being? What is “better” when applied to people? Is creating a child for the purposes of competing and generating income in a capitalist system good for the child, the family, the society, or the species?

The history of class systems privileging certain skin colors and body types above others leads me to conclude that a prevalence of baby-designing would result in a flattening of human genetic diversity through the creation of people that fit current models of beauty and success.

Leslie Jamison’s article for the December 2017 issue of *The Atlantic* investigates sociological patterns that emerge in the life-simulation game *Second Life*. Despite virtual reality’s promise of the creation of “an equal playing field, free from the structures of class and race”, the game’s “preponderance of slender white bodies” speaks to the underlying social construct of “whiteness as invisible default” that is simply reinforced in the game. A video game is not genetic engineering, but it does provide us with an analogous scenario: Given the opportunity to create any new world imaginable, people will tend to work with the value systems and markers of success of the old world. Does a future of baby-designing portend the same bland, whitewashed world as this virtual reality experiment? Would it not make more sense to remedy societal and cultural problems rather than building a race to meet arbitrary (and highly flawed) standards of beauty and worth?

I leave you with more questions than answers, but this is as it should be. Our technological society currently sees only purported answers in each new development, remaining blind to the potential questions and ramifications. Dwell not in simplistic hope in technology, forget not the dreadful consequences of previous technologies such as the internal combustion engine and nuclear energy. Consider what tampering with the human genome portends for next one, ten, or a hundred generations.

Until He’s announcement, we lived in the age wrought on the sixth day. What hath the hand of man wrought after the sixth day?



Still Fighting for Stonewall

An ongoing look at LGBTQ activism around the world

by Daniel J. Nickolas

illustration by Jake Johnson

Hours before sunrise on the morning of June 28th, 1969, members of the LGBTQ community fought back against a police raid at a New York City gay bar known as The Stonewall Inn. This incident, known today as “The Stonewall Uprising” or “The Stonewall Riots,” was a historical moment in which queer people began to demand that their right to exist be acknowledged; this event is widely credited as the major turning point for the LGBTQ Rights movement in the United States.

June 28th of this year will mark the 50th anniversary of The Stonewall Uprising. In the half-century since Stonewall, this country has seen progress in the establishing of anti-discrimination laws, marriage equality, and a greater sense of understanding from the U.S. population in general.

We’ve even see examples of this progress in the recent history of the State of Oregon: Oregon’s 2015 decision to ban conversion therapy (making it the third state to do so) is a huge leap forward from Oregon’s 1992 Proposition 9, which would have amended the Oregon Constitution to define homosexuality as “abnormal, wrong, unnatural and perverse.” Yes, we’ve come a long way.

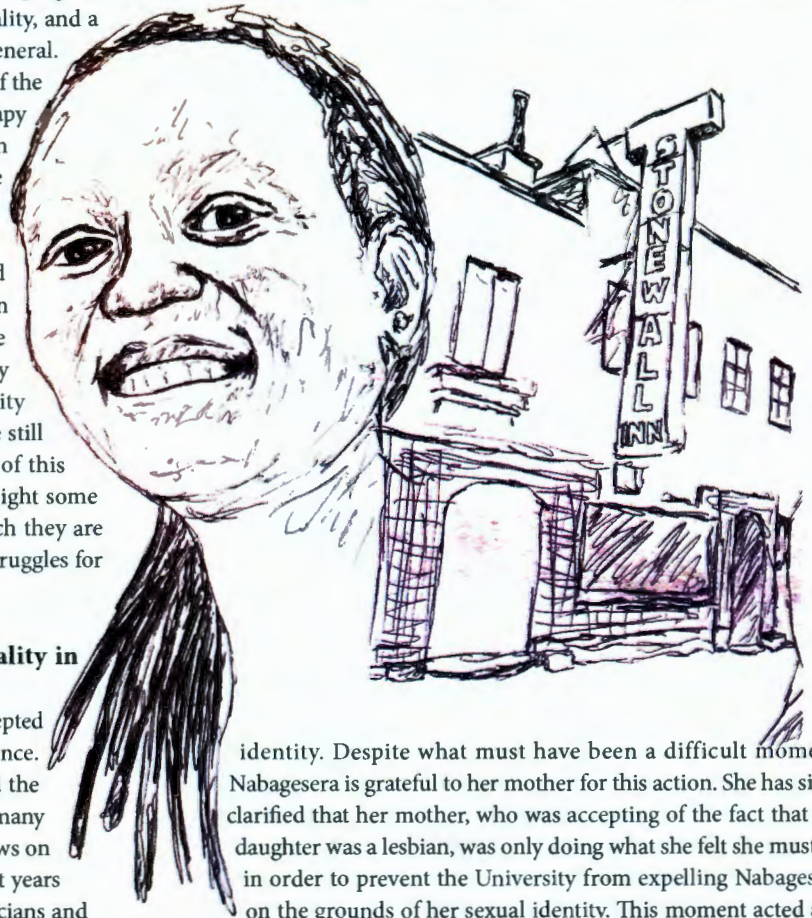
While it’s important to acknowledge these steps forward since Stonewall, it’s equally important to remember that we in the United States, despite having many steps left to take, are lucky to have had a historical moment like Stonewall. Many LGBTQ activists around the world are still fighting for equality in countries where such progress has yet to be made; they are still hoping for their Stonewall turning point. It is the intention of this article, to be serialized over the next several months, to highlight some of these activists, to examine the discrimination against which they are fighting, and to consider the implications of their continued struggles for our post-Stonewall society here in the U.S.

Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera and the fight for equality in Uganda

The peoples who now make up modern day Uganda mostly accepted homosexuality and bisexuality prior to Western cultural influence. Due in part to Western colonization in the 19th century and the work of religious missionaries then and now, Uganda is one of many African nations that experienced a significant regress in its views on queer individuals since the area was first colonized. In the first years of the new millenium, this regress worsened in Uganda. Politicians and people in power have propagated and legalized homophobia in such ways that many analyses have suggested that homophobia is currently being used as a political tool in Uganda. The nation has seen both the introduction of new anti-queer laws, and the strengthening of existing discriminatory laws, which have caused a growing attitude of hostility against queer people. A 2013 survey conducted by Pew Research Center found that Ugandan citizens over the age of 50 had the *highest* rate of acceptance toward LGBTQ individuals, indicating that the increase of discriminatory legislation is affecting the younger generations’ views toward queer people. Sections 145 and 146 of Uganda’s Penal Code Act states that any individual who acts “against the order of nature (i.e. is homosexual)” can face up to seven years

in prison. Furthermore, Uganda’s Anti-Homosexuality Act, which would call for a lifetime prison sentence for people convicted of being queer, could still become law. But alongside this increase in discrimination has come an increase in Uganda’s fight for LGBTQ rights, exemplified in the life of activist Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera.

A turning point in Nabagesera’s life was the day her mother, speaking to the president of the University Nabagesera was attending, asked that her daughter be allowed to finish her degree, despite suffering from an incurable sickness—by which her mother meant Nabagesera’s lesbian



identity. Despite what must have been a difficult moment, Nabagesera is grateful to her mother for this action. She has since clarified that her mother, who was accepting of the fact that her daughter was a lesbian, was only doing what she felt she must do in order to prevent the University from expelling Nabagesera on the grounds of her sexual identity. This moment acted as a catalyst for Nabagesera to educate herself and her community about LGBTQ people, and the underlying reasons for Uganda’s cultural hostility against them.

Nabagesera recalls witnessing a great deal of discrimination during her upbringing in Uganda, from the call for the genocide of homosexuals preached from church pulpits, to an actual expulsion from school at the age of 13 for writing a love letter to another girl. It was not until she was at university that she first made the connection between her lesbian identity and the struggles she faced in her society. This initial realization led her to pursue human rights activism after she graduated, despite having earned her degree in accounting. It also inspired Nabagesera in 2003 to form

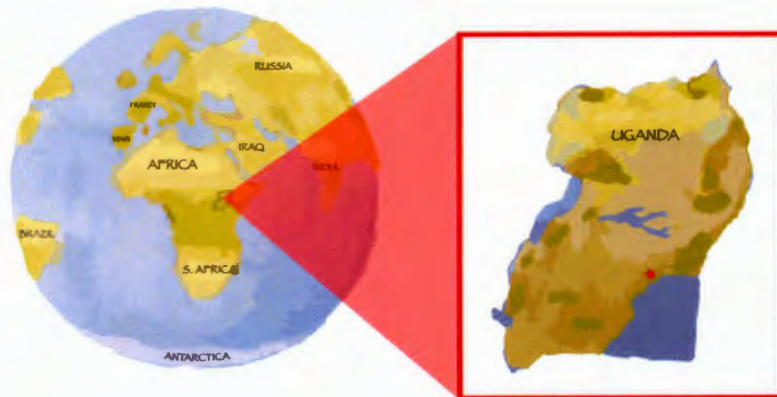
“Freedom and Roam Uganda,” a group for queer women, which is the first official queer organization in the country. The successful creation of this group earned Nabagesera the title “Founding Mother of Uganda’s LGBTI Movement.” To this day, the organization continues to campaign for queer and women’s rights in Uganda.

Nabagesera’s new-found activism also garnered a lot of negative attention. In October of 2010, the Ugandan magazine *Rolling Stone* (no affiliation to the American publication) released a list of names of queer Ugandans, along with their home addresses and photographs of the individuals, published under the headline “Hang Them.” The magazine promised queer individuals would continue to be outed in the coming issues. Three people on the initial list, including Nabagesera, stepped forward to sue the magazine for violating Uganda’s constitutional right to privacy. Nabagesera and the other plaintiffs won their court case in January of the following year, though the celebration of this victory did not last long.

On January 26th 2011, just two weeks after winning the case, queer activist David Kato (who was also outed in the aforementioned magazine article, and who was one of the plaintiffs against the magazine) was bludgeoned to death with a hammer in his home. The preacher conducting Kato’s funeral used the opportunity to demonize homosexuals, further exemplifying the major role that evangelical fundamentalism plays in propagating homophobia in nations across the world. While Ugandan officials ruled Kato’s death to be unaffiliated to his activism, Nabagesera does not believe this to be accurate. In a speech given in 2015, Nabagesera credits this incident as the moment she realized how dangerous and important her activism is. And in fact, Nabagesera’s activism became more focused after Kato’s death.

In 2014, Nabagesera campaigned against Uganda’s proposed “Anti-Homosexuality Act,” which would have made homosexual relationships punishable with life in prison. Though the bill garnered surprising support from the community, due in large part to the rhetoric of influential figures supporting the bill and misinformation from the media, The Anti-Homosexuality Act was eventually defeated on a technicality. However, there are currently supporters inside and outside of the government attempting to reintroduce the bill. Nabagesera then went on to found the magazine *Ms. Bombastic*, a magazine aimed at exposing anti-gay rhetoric in the media and telling the stories of LGBTQ individuals in and around Uganda. The ultimate goal of the magazine is not only to create a space for queer individuals to tell their stories and live more openly, but to create a resource for the public at large to become more informed about and familiarized with queer topics.

In 2015, Nabagesera was awarded the prestigious The Right Livelihood Award. She has become a globally recognized voice among LGBTQ activists, and, despite continued discrimination, still lives in Uganda; she has said many times that leaving her home (by which she means Uganda) is not an option. She continues to encourage LGBTQ individuals to live their lives openly, believing that this is a necessary first step in progressing the conversation around queer individuals.



map illustration by Jon Bordas

Continuing to Live Openly

Nabagesera encouraging queer individuals to have a willingness to be open about their queer identity continues to be an important aspect of the fight for LGBTQ rights not only in Uganda, but here in the United States. Being open about one’s queer identity reminds society that queer people are real people, and that they deserve to be recognized as such. It might seem like we as a society are past the need to remind others of the existence of LGBTQ individuals, but Vice President Mike Pence’s 2018 AIDS Day speech argues the contrary. In a speech delivered on December 1st (AIDS Day) 2018, Pence failed to mention *anything* about the LGBTQ community, a community both devastated by the AIDS epidemic in the 1980s, and still disproportionately affected by the virus to this day. Furthermore, the Trump administration failed to recognize Pride month in both 2017 and 2018. And the erasure of the LGBTQ community has not always been so passive in the last few years. Let us not forget President Trump’s sudden July 2017 announcement, via Twitter, that transgender individuals would no longer be allowed in the U.S. military “in any capacity”; or that the Trump administration might legally redefine gender in such a way as to imply that transgender people do not exist. How familiar Nabagesera’s words from her The Right Livelihood Award acceptance speech sound to us: “The structures that are supposed to protect me, are the structures that are violating me.”

The need for queer individuals and queer allies to be open about who they are remains an important need. It is a foundational step in preventing such erasure as that implied by Pence’s AIDS day speech or Trump’s anti-transgender attitudes—that subtle rhetoric validating the misconception that queer people do not deserve recognition, or that they do not exist at all. But perhaps the most influential reason for openness is, as Nabagesera implies, simply to demystify queer identities to those who, based off misinformation and the unknown, fear the LGBTQ community. It is easy to fear the perceived “other,” but it is difficult to fear a neighbor you know and respect.

“And then we came out and showed our faces, and there was a change, a shift of attitudes. People were like, ‘Oh, they are real people’... That already is improvement.”
—Kasha Jacqueline Nabagesera

A Student Sails the Seas

by Jesse Trott

As a student, I have spent day after day trying to pave my path in the world, trying to discern my deep passions from my short term obsessions, and trying to enjoy every moment. For me, I have found that it is easiest to figure all of this out if I am experiencing different things and deciding what I like. About a year and a half ago, I started asking for what I wanted, because the worst that can happen is I get told “no.” So I began applying for everything I could possibly apply for that even slightly intrigued me. This is how I found myself aboard a research boat for a week in October in the Bering Sea.

A year ago, I applied for a program called STEMSEAS (science, technology, engineering, and math student experiences aboard ships), which takes undergrad students on transits aboard research vessels (R/Vs) for about a week in order to give the students first hand experience about what it would be like to do real ocean research. I had completely forgotten I applied for the program until I got an email in August 2018 that STEMSEAS wanted to interview me for the October expedition aboard the R/V Sikuliaq on a transit from Nome, Alaska to Seward, Alaska through the Bering Sea, the Aleutian Islands, and the North Pacific near Kodiak Island. I did the interview, got my acceptance letter, and then began planning to go.

As quickly as the acceptance process

happened, the leaving process seemed faster. I hopped on a plane in Portland and eventually landed in Nome, Alaska. Nome has to be one of the smallest airports; it was one room that included check-in, security, baggage claim, and passenger pickup. It was in this airport that I saw my chief scientist standing with a sign reading, “Sikuliaq- Welcome STEMSEAS! Tips welcome.” Within five minutes, the other students and I were being shuffled outside and into a van. We took a five-minute drive through downtown Nome and out to the Harbor where I got to finally see the Sikuliaq. It is a fairly new research vessel owned and operated by the University of Alaska. As I was standing there, the size of this ship blew me away; it was large in size, both long and tall. This was the first moment that the nerves left me and I was excited, but slightly fearful.

The other students and I were quickly rushed onto the ship and shown to our staterooms where we were told to make our beds while we were still docked. The seas were going to be rough as soon as we left the harbor because of two storm systems moving in. Life on a boat quickly began with dinner in the galley followed by a safety briefing that was rough because at this point we had left the harbor and were headed into the Bering Sea. Over the course of the next few days the seas were angry; at moments it felt like the boat was going to tip over. Personally, I was so

seasick I was unable to leave my stateroom (well, actually unable to get out of bed) without being incredibly sick.

Thankfully, on the fourth morning aboard the ship, I could tell that the seas had calmed, and the storm had passed. I finally made it out of bed and to breakfast, which I could barely eat any of after being on a diet of water and crackers for three whole days. After breakfast, we were down in the lab examining sediment that had been collected two days ago on the continental shelf in the Bering Sea. We were discerning what it was mostly made of when the phone rang in the lab. It was the captain calling to tell us to come up to the bridge because there was a pod of fin whales really close. We scurried up the stairs and into the bridge as fast as possible. When we reached the top, and, for the first time, I looked out at the blue ocean with land nowhere in sight; I cried. This was a dream of mine for as long as I can remember and it finally came true. The next three days were full of whale sighting after whale sighting, porpoises, jellyfish, all of the seabirds imaginable, magnificent islands, blue skies, and the sun shining bright—all in the midst of analyzing the data that was taken during the storm. We studied the stability of water columns, the DNA analysis of seawater, and sea floor sediment composition.





In order to do most of the science we used a device called a CDT, which stands for conductivity, depth, and temperature. As the CDT gets dropped deeper into the water it is sending data into the computers aboard the ship for scientists to be able to analyze. We used this data by creating various graphs and tables with MATLAB. These graphs and tables helped us to determine the stability of the water columns in the Bering Sea. Not to our surprise, the water columns were very unstable; this was likely due to the major storms that were passing through. The CDT also collects water samples on the way down from all different depths. These samples were used to do a DNA analysis of the seawater using a different device called the Nanopore MinION; which was used for the first time on a research vessel during this transit. This DNA analysis showed changes to microbial communities because of the storms.

For the geologic composition of the sea floor, we used what was basically a giant metal claw to take samples from three different locations along the continental shelf. If the seas would have been calm, we would have been able to take core samples and look slightly past the surface sediment and get more in-depth information. After the sediment was collected, we used different sizes of strainers in order to separate the sediment by size; then used microscopes to sort the sediment into the different types as best as possible. Although separating sediment by one grain at a time is incredibly difficult on a constantly moving ship.

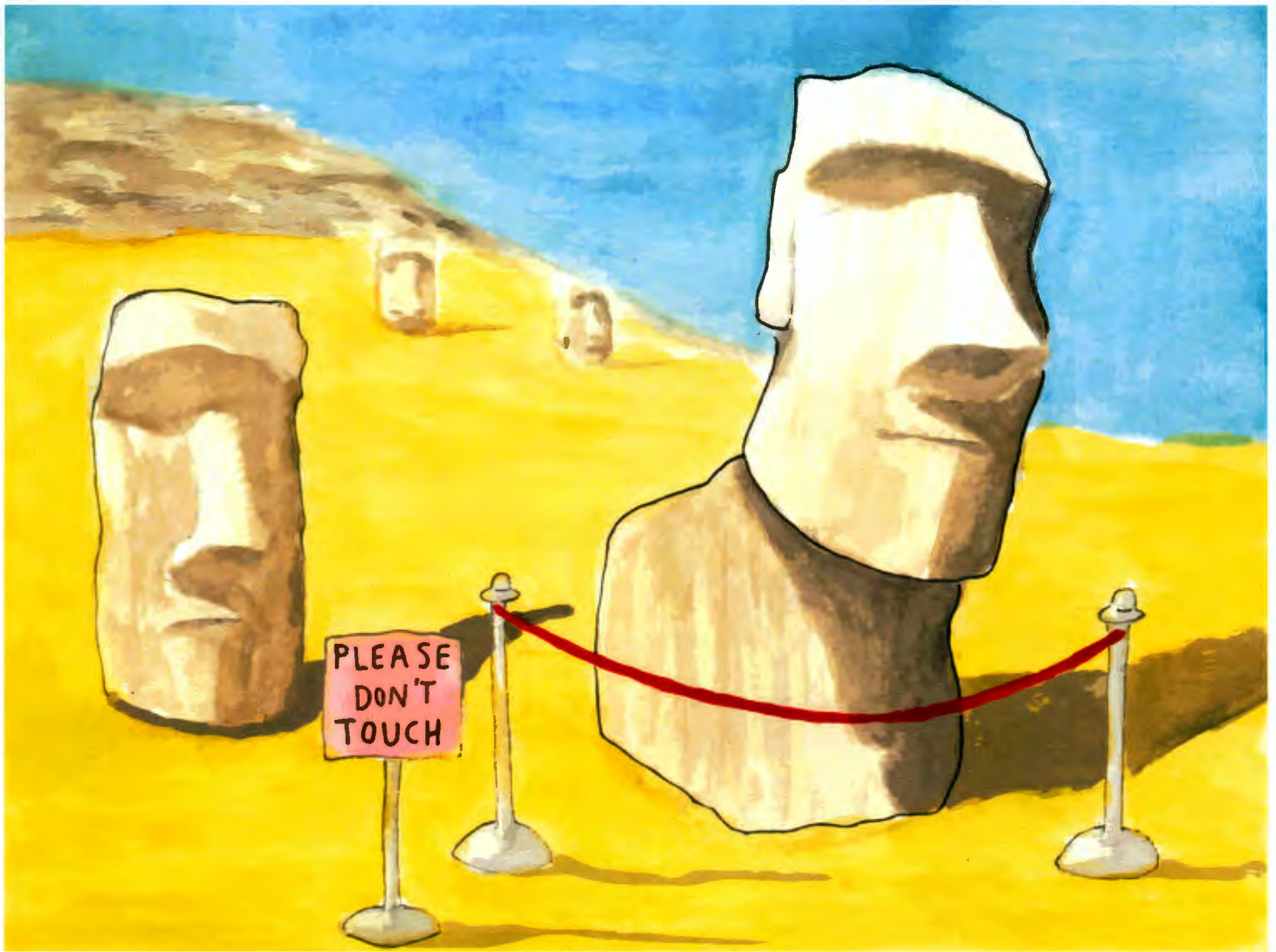
Even though the science we did on the ship was minimal, it was incredibly interesting and insightful. Our days were full from dawn to dusk with all of the science and wildlife—while also sneaking in conversations with the crew of the Sikuliaq to learn all about life at sea, from the top to the bottom of the boat. The crew had us participate in “watches,” both in the bridge and in the engineering room; through these watches we basically learned, in detail, how the ship operates and the duties of the crew members. Although I personally spent more time in the bridge than I was required to, but the view was impeccable.

And long before I was ready for the transit to end, the dock in Seward came into sight. As I sat there looking out the porthole, I found myself incredibly grateful for my time spent at sea, all of the people that I came into contact with, and the discovery of a new passion. Since leaving Alaska and the Sikuliaq, I have dreamt of returning and am searching for my next opportunity to join a crew of scientists and sailors aboard a vessel to sail the seas.



Opposite page. Jesse Trott stands at the back of the R/V Sikuliaq on the stern holding an Alaskan flag. photo by Katie Jo Campbell Photography, photo illustration by Jake Johnson

This page. Top left: Sikuliaq research teams lower the CDT into the sea to collect data and water samples for analysis. photo by Jesse Trott. Lower Left: Looking out the back of the R/V Sikuliaq as it travels along its route from Nome to Seward, Alaska collecting data. photo by Jesse Trott



The Statue With a Voice

by Saqif Maqsud

illustrations by Jon Bordas

It is astonishing to witness how art touches people. Art presents itself to us in numerous forms. To the untrained or rather busy eye, a painting or a sculpture is just another piece. But to the select many, art has a connection, a relationship that is unique to every individual. This bond may at times be a bond with the self, or it may be a contract with many souls. It speaks a language of its own when the pledge runs deep and becomes enrooted in and as a culture. When an object with such abstract emotion is kidnapped and forcibly removed from its native land, a sacred link is tarnished. Such is the case with the Moai statue that now sits under a spotlight in the British Museum. The word Moai is used to refer to the

head-like figures carved by the inhabitants of Easter Island in Eastern Polynesia, known as the Rapa Nui.

Museums across the globe harbor pieces that were once part of a country's culture and history. To address them as pilfered art makes sense; however, calling them stolen, looted, or uprooted is not actually possible because of the complexity of their origin stories. Statues and other art we see in museums, especially those acquired from foreign lands, have stories they stand on. These artifacts have voices that remain silent, and their stories untold. However, the scenario is different for the Moai statue that sits in the British Museum. According to an article by *The Independent*, the Moai statues

of Easter Island were left to rest on the island about 150 years ago. Their peace was soon disturbed by the HMS *Topaze* captained by Richard Powell. Taken during an expedition by the British Royal Navy, the Moai is one of many artifacts looted during the reign of the British Empire. Upon its arrival on English soil, the sailors presented the Moai to Queen Victoria in 1869. Her Majesty then decided to donate it to the British Museum, and the Moai has been a part of the collection ever since.

There was a very good chance that this Moai would just be in thousands of photo albums in phones and cameras, had it not been for the voice of the Rapa Nui people. With support from the Chilean government,

the Rapa Nui people have given the Moai in the museum life. The statue has successfully made headlines, not just because it is news, but because it opens up debates on museums and their possession of foreign artifacts. Last November, the Rapa Nui met in London with representatives from the British Museum to discuss returning the statue. There is this extremely personal connection we see here, where the people are asking for a piece of their soul back. The natives have named the statue *Hoa Hakananai'a*, which translates to "the lost or stolen friend." *Hoa Hakananai'a* stands tall at the entrance of the British Museum's welcome gallery. The 2.5 metre statue of basalt greets numerous visitors from around the world, whereas, it should be on Easter Island, carrying the spirit of the island's ancestors. The spiritual qualities of the statue were highlighted when Anakena Manuatomatoma, who serves on the island's development commission told *The Guardian*, "We want the museum to understand that the moai are our family, not just rocks. For us [the statue] is a brother; but for them it is a souvenir or an attraction."

I believe the situation of *Hoa Hakananai'a* and the how the British Museum handles it, will set an example to use for similar scenarios. I believe this should lead to an interesting debate, both weights on the scale are very important and do not necessarily outweigh each other. One cannot surely deny that the statue at the British Museum is kept with the best of care and preservation

and so are other rare pieces. To return these statues and put them up for display in its once natural state may cause more harm than good. The change in climate alone will be a major problem to tackle. Will the native and in fact rightful custodians of the statue be able to provide the same exact environment the statue has been in for the last 150 years? Furthermore, it must also be considered that the Moai at the museum offers many people the opportunity to educate themselves about the cultures and history of Easter Island without having to go the islands themselves; although this is a very tourist orientated opinion, it does hold some truth. To ease the tension of the claim of ownership, the Museum can declare that the statue belongs to the Rapa Nui people, and acknowledge the complicated history of how the statue came to the Museum. However, to return the statue to the island, in my opinion, may result in more damages than benefits.

Personally I would not like it if someone took something of value from my home and kept it away until it became nothing more than a memory to me. But the Moai isn't a decoration piece, nor is it a subject of light ridicule. It is personal to the Rapa Nui people, and, by all means, a part of their heart. However, the past has shown us that a power imbalance between imperial nations like Britain or the United States and indigenous people creates a very unfriendly equation of power and rights over indigenous art. Regardless of it being

snatched away, it has become a part of the word "history" and has been given a global platform. All the Moai needed was a voice, and thanks to the Rapa Nui people, it now speaks to us in words we know.

There is no right or wrong way to understand the complication of this Moai's rightful place, but perhaps the poem, "On Seeing the Elgin Marbles," by John Keats, will help the reader by providing a lens or two of perspective. The Elgin, also called the Parthenon Marbles, is an artifact laced with a history of debate and politics. Like the Moai, it is displayed in the British Museum, on a global platform, voiced with that of John Keats. His poem speaks of the marvels of human creativity and how it can outlast its creators. With regards to perspective, the poem is cloaked in sadness and I believe that is one perception that can hardly be wrong. For the Moai, the debates and politics may outlive us all, but the thought that it may never return to its rightful place, scars the hearts of those who share theirs with the Moai.



RED CLOCKS & RISING ANTI-ABORTION LAWS

by C.J. Claringbold

illustration by Jake Johnson

"You can't say it was rape or incest—nobody cares how it got into you," muses the Daughter while waiting to be busted at the Canada border for the crime of trying to leave the country to get an abortion, in the best-selling 2018 novel *Red Clocks* by Portland State University's Creative Writing Program Director, Leni Zumas.

"What if your bio mother had chosen to terminate?" asks the Dad in another scene. The Daughter answers, "Well, she didn't but other people should be able to... Why can't everyone just decide for themselves?" The Daughter eventually gets the procedure—secretly, illegally, dangerously, and late. Her pregnancy is in the second trimester when she finally arrives at a "term house"—a clandestine abortion clinic where the doctor "worked at Planned Parenthood for almost twenty years. Until the day they shut it down."

In the world of *Red Clocks*, it has been two years since "the United States Congress passed the Personhood Amendment, which gives the constitutional rights to life, liberty and property to a fertilized egg at the moment of conception." It's been a year since Zumas's book hit the shelves; in that time, a five-seat majority was created on the U.S. Supreme Court—a majority which can and probably will overturn or limit federal abortion rights.

The characters in *Red Clocks* are all grappling with a different reproductive issue, and they're frustrated. They are forced to sneak, lie, hide, and subvert. The book takes place in Oregon in the near future, but it could be Ohio right now: in December, Ohio Governor John Kasich signed a law prohibiting the procedure called "dilation and evacuation," commonly used in second-trimester abortions (13 to 28 weeks). Effectively, there will be no more legal second-trimester abortions in Ohio. The law makes no exceptions for rape or incest. However, at the same time, Kasich vetoed the "heartbeat bill," which would have outlawed abortions as soon as a fetal heartbeat is detected (approximately six weeks). This must have been disappointing to Rebecca Kiessling, who has testified before the Ohio Congress and has been urging the U.S. Congress to approve a national heartbeat bill, without exceptions.

Kiessling is a family law attorney from Michigan who made headlines for her pro-bono representation of a woman who became pregnant after being raped at the age of 12. Some eight years after the child was born, the rapist was granted paternity rights, under unusual circumstances: a judge signed the petition without the mother's consent and without any knowledge that the child had been conceived in rape; an assistant prosecutor was fired and the judge's decision was reversed. But it was in the news; and the world became aware that most states did not have any laws in place to prevent rapists from seeking custody of children they conceived. Now they do, thanks in part to the activism of Rebecca Kiessling and Analyn Megison. These are the co-founders of Hope After Rape Conception, and while their work has garnered some positive results, it is clear that they have a disconcerting agenda.

Conceived in rape. This is Rebecca Kiessling's identity, an identity which she proudly embraces and proclaims at every opportunity. Having been

conceived when her mother was raped, Kiessling survived because her mother couldn't obtain an abortion. She refers to her own biological children as "second generation abortion survivors." This distinction is important to Kiessling, it is the touchstone of her quest to end abortion rights for women.

Analyn Megison is the mother of a child conceived when Megison was raped. Like Kiessling, she uses her personal story to persuade politicians toward her anti-choice views. Megison was instrumental in drafting the Rape Survivor Custody Act, which Congresswoman Debbie Wasserman Schultz (D-FL) filed, and which President Obama signed into law in 2015. As of June 2018, 45 states are taking advantage of the incentive made possible by this act: more funding to help survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault for states that allow women to petition for termination of a rapist's parental rights.

So an anti-choice lawyer who co-founded a pink website which outlines "Ten Steps to Shut Down Planned Parenthood" and directs visitors to a site called Personhood USA, where they can "adopt" aborted fetuses, is the same one who worked with a Democratic senator to manage a legislative effort, hailed as bipartisan, which takes parental rights away from rapists. Most people would agree that this is a good idea. But we need to remember that Megison and Kiessling have a much bigger goal in mind. Their work to establish the importance of parental rights for rape survivors is couched in a larger effort to promote the idea of personhood. While claiming to empower women and using trauma-informed language in line with the #MeToo movement, they stress the horrors of extreme cases: the outrageous situation of custody being awarded to a man who raped a 12-year old, for example. But what is really important to them is that babies be born, regardless of circumstances. Their work on behalf of rape survivors, which most would agree is absolutely important and necessary, paves the way to prove their larger case, which is that fetuses conceived in rape are valuable. Thus they can argue for an end to rape exceptions. Without exceptions for rape, women who have become pregnant without their consent will not be able to access state Medicaid funds to exercise their legal right to abortion.

Oregon is the one of ten states identified by Planned Parenthood as safest for abortion rights, according to a Dec. 22 article in *The Portland Mercury*. Oregon has many protections in place, including the Reproductive Health Equity Act, which Governor Kate Brown signed into law in 2017. This law requires insurance companies to cover abortions regardless of a person's income, gender or immigration status. So it's reasonable that in *Red Clocks*, the Daughter ended up getting good care in her home state of Oregon when she was finally able to visit a "term house." These places are painted as scary death-traps out in the sticks where the Daughter lives, yet her determination takes her all the way to Canada, before she gets what she needs in good old Portland, Oregon, where there are secret places run by hardcore feminists who provide illegal abortions and also organize protests to "repeal the 28th amendment" (the Personhood Amendment in the world of *Red Clocks*).

A critical review of *Red Clocks* on Bitch Media complained, "When she finally gets an illegal abortion, it magically takes place in a clean, loving, warm place with skilled medical professionals—thanks, one supposes, to her network of connections." While it's true that this is a character with white privilege, it isn't so "magical" to think that secret, skilled abortion clinics would be possible in this plausible, future Portland.

In fact, *The Mercury* reports that Planned Parenthood is constructing a "network of pro-choice outposts [to] ensure that those living in states that ban abortions can still safely access the procedure." While it's still in the early stages, it's interesting that Planned Parenthood will focus its efforts on strengthening the areas where they already have good standing. They are getting ready for the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* and preparing for the time of *Red Clocks*. Right now, 22 states are poised to outlaw abortion immediately if *Roe* is overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court. The big problem will be in funding the care of all the women from these states who will need to travel to one of the ten stronghold states, such as Oregon, to receive abortion services post-*Roe*. A national Personhood Amendment, as in *Red Clocks*, or a heartbeat bill, would make this even more difficult. Maybe Planned Parenthood will start converting neighborhood homes into underground pop-up clinics and setting up decoy houses to throw the feds off the scent, like in the novel, when the Daughter has to wear a mask while being driven across town from a fake term house to the real one. This could be our future!

Let's look again at the co-founders of Hope After Rape Conception. As a lawyer, Rebecca Kiessling appears to fight for women's rights, stand up against sexual assault, and demand punishment for rapists and a trauma-free future for survivors. Anlyn Megison, also a lawyer, is another of the so-called "Feminists For Life," which has the registered motto "We refuse to choose." The tactic here is to persuade a pregnant woman that she really can have it all. She should "refuse to choose" between having a child and pursuing an education and/or career. Nevermind if she becomes pregnant without her consent. In refusing to choose abortion, she will be empowered, which means bearing all responsibilities of unplanned child-rearing and also somehow having a wealth of advantages and privileges that make it possible to parent while working and/or studying full-time.

By providing links to "resources" for single mothers, these people think they've taken care of the problem. Worse, by using the language of choice to talk about the difficulties of pregnancy, childbirth, and parenting, and framing it with a rebellious-sounding imperative that echoes the slogans of the resistance, they bring to mind the pro-choice/anti-choice argument and take a stand against those who uphold "choice" as the basic tenet of individual freedom and the locus of the battle for reproductive rights. The call to "refuse to choose" gives women who don't choose abortions a sense of their own superiority in rebelling against the thing they hate: having to make choices. Slogans like this

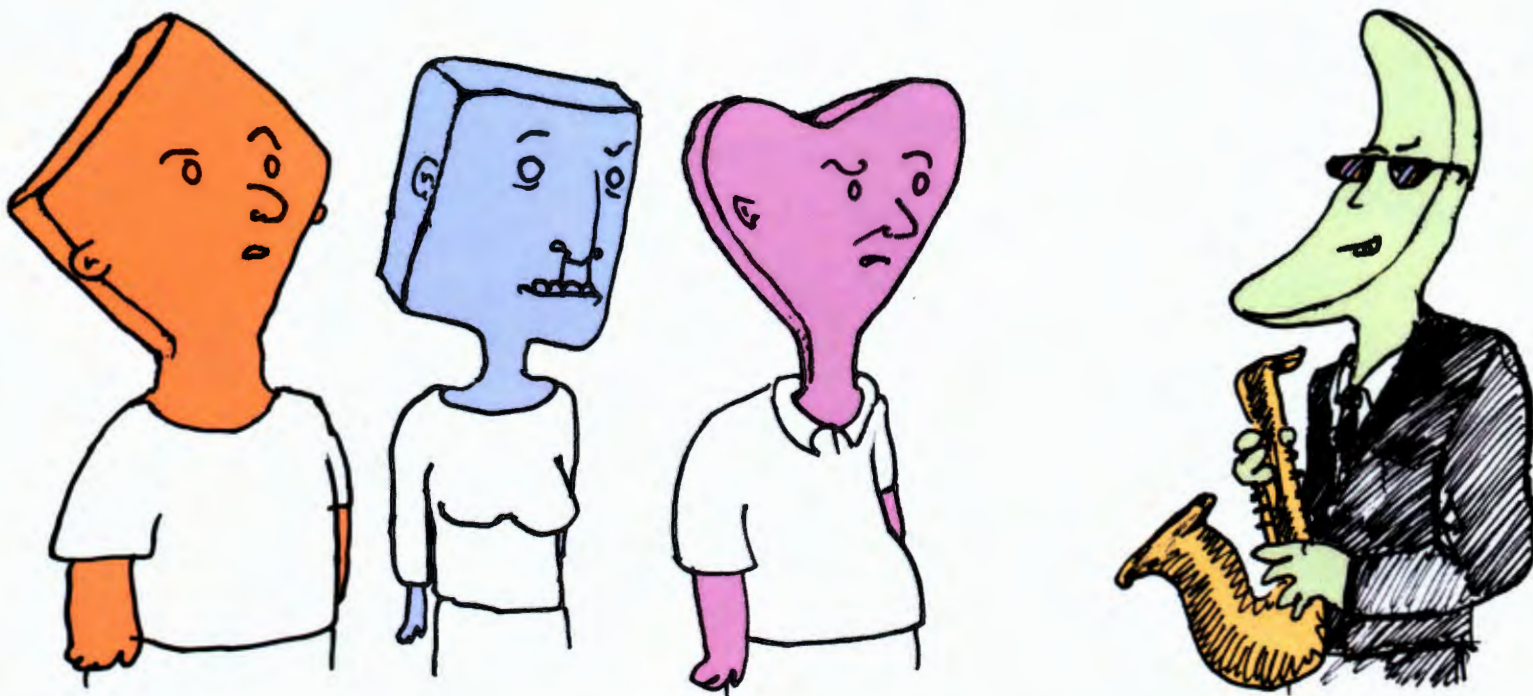
are carefully employed to coerce women into giving up their rights and feeling good about it. The slogans, the "resources," the ability to terminate a rapist's parental rights—these are all cushions for the blow, gestures intended to make women content and resigned to a lack of abortion access as more and more clinics are closed and the nation steps closer to the world of *Red Clocks*.

With a strong emotional appeal driven by religious zeal, and a strategic plan that includes working with Democrats, Kiessling and Megison chip away at abortion access, supplying part of the answer to the question, "How can a *Red Clocks* world be possible?" The Rape Survivor Custody Act seems to solve a universal problem; it appears to transcend politics. But its anti-choice authors, by eliminating the potential trauma of custody battles with rapists, see themselves as boldly breaking down barriers which make rape victims likely to seek abortions, as if being raped is not enough reason to not want to bear a child. Instead, rape survivors will get full custody. This is supposed to be an incentive; it's supposed to be empowering.

In some ways, this legislation anticipates a post-*Roe* future when, without the means of safe and legal abortions, many more children will be born of rape. Nipping the question of custody in the bud now gives women a false sense of empowerment and choice. Perhaps it's intended to prevent a total uprising of women; the amazing single moms-of-children-conceived-in-rape of the future will be too busy "doing it all" to mount any protest against the latest patriarchal onslaught.

"Feminists for Life" are the endgame of feminist-sounding, anti-abortion organizations who are shaping laws in conservative states right now. Their goal is that anyone with a womb who becomes pregnant will be forced to use that womb to bear a child, without exception. This is not feminist. Yet this is the work that is being done by religious-minded people who are leading us straight to the world of the Personhood Amendment as described in *Red Clocks*. And that is a very real and clear danger, evidenced by Planned Parenthood's decision to concentrate its efforts in a ten-state network. It could happen at any time, and we can look for the workings of the anti-choice machine not just in anti-choice legislation, but also in policies which seem to be pro-woman but can be used as stepping stones to a bleak future.





What Is Your Face Shape?

You may be an "Autumn," but did you know you're also a rectangle?

by Raz Mostaghimi

illustrations by Josh Gates

As we all know, attaining beauty is like completing a 5,000-piece puzzle in a timeshare log cabin basement. It's always expensive to obtain, it requires time and patience we usually don't have, and we have to be punishingly methodical or extremely lucky in order to do it right. Luckily, magazines have provided a plethora of quick tips on how to properly categorize aspects of your body to make the process a little faster—and it's much more efficient than assigning all the red pieces to one friend and all the edge pieces to another. If you've ever wondered why your face looks so bad with everything, this is the article for you!

There are seven different face shapes, just like the seven colors of the rainbow! When Sir Isaac Newton first categorized the color spectrum, he intentionally chose the number seven because, as a diehard Pythagoras fan, he believed the number seven had magical lucky properties. He just threw in the color indigo—a term normally reserved for woo-woo types—so he could have a lucky amount of colors. To keep up with tradition, this list will have its own totally arbitrary "indigo" face shape that is just a blend of other face shapes.

To begin, take a good, hard look at yourself in the mirror. Only this time, instead of reflecting on your past mistakes and place in the universe, actually look at your face. What's the widest part of your face? The longest? Is your jaw rounded? Angular? Pointy? You're probably used to scrutinizing your looks for the sake of beauty so this step shouldn't take too long. Once you're done with that, read the face descriptions below to find the one that best matches yours.

OVAL

Your face is longer than it is wide, with smooth, even proportions. It perfectly aligns with our everlasting, scientifically-proven, completely unbiased standards of beauty, and for that, you should be respected. For makeup, we recommend using Glossier products, which were made for people like you in mind. Accessorize your face with incessant humblebragging, such as “I keep buying too many hats because I just look so good in them!” or “Ugh, it’s so embarrassing when cashiers give me their employee discount when I buy my almond butter...” or “I AM THE MOLD YOU CONTORT YOURSELVES INTO!”

Celebrities with your face shape: Beyonce, presumably Aphrodite

ROUND

Aww, widdle baby. Your face is as wong as it is wide, with no anguwar featuwes. To downpway the wide-cheeked, youthful affect your face has, we wecomend shouwder-wength stywes with wots of wayers and cawwying a bwiefcase aound at all times.

Cewebrities with your face shape: Sewena Gomez, the Gewber Baby



SQUARE

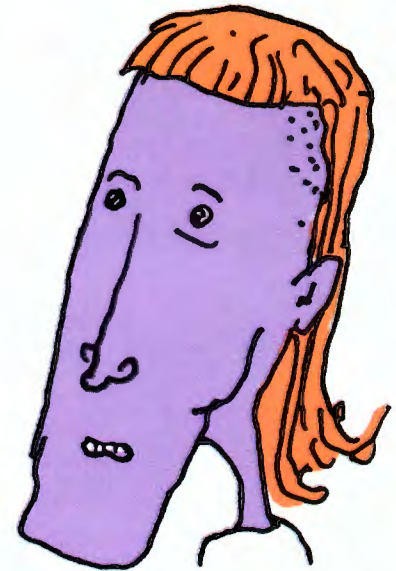
Like round faces, your face is as long as it is wide, with an angular jaw and a wide forehead. One issue with your face shape is that people will assume you aren’t any fun. To soften your features (because they must be softened) we recommend wispy layers and side-swept bangs—essentially you should be recreating the year 2005 on your head. To offset your no-nonsense exterior, consider occasionally wearing a clown nose.

Celebrities with your face shape: Demi Lovato and SpongeBob Squarepants

HEART

If you have a wide forehead and a strong jaw that tapers to a point, your face is heart-shaped! Like love itself, at times you are soft and welcoming and at times you are piercing and sharp. Lean into the romance of it all! Big, full hair à la Kate Bush will complement your jawline, accompany it with a rain-soaked white dress, and consider investing in a fainting couch.

Celebrities with your face shape: Amanda Seyfried, Zooey Deschanel, and the heart-shaped pillow from Ikea with those welcoming arms that you want to wrap around yourself and take a long, shaky breath



DIAMOND

This is it. This is the indigo face shape. If your face is widest at its cheekbones and has an angular jaw, you have a “diamond” shape. We just did this to please the ghost of Pythagoras. Take a look at the heart and square sections for some ideas, I don’t know. Alternatively, take the indigo label in stride and claim that your face shape puts you on a higher level of vibrations than most humans.

Celebrities with your face shape: Anna Kendrick and JLo (We think?)

RECTANGLE / OBLONG

If your face is twice as long as it is wide and you have a straight jawline, you have an oblong or rectangular face. People will often ask you, “why the long face?” and you can say, “my face has just fallen short of the Chosen Face Shape, the Ovals.” To conceal your shameful face crimes, consider getting bangs.

Celebrities with your face shape: Alexa Chung and Bojack Horseman

TRIANGLE / PEAR SHAPED

If you have a narrower forehead and a wider jaw, your face is triangular! Give the illusion of a wider forehead by placing small mirrors on your temples. Next to heart, your face shape is the most likely to be tattooed on someone’s arm. But be wary of people with triangle-shaped faces, especially in pairs. Why? A triangle has three sides. Three. If you have two people with triangle-shaped faces, that’s six sides total. Six. Three. Three sixes. Six... six... six! A sign of the Antichrist! Ahhhh!

Celebrities with your face shape: Ellie Kemper, the Pyramids of Giza



Library Archives

PSU has portals to its past, and we're all invited

black and white photos courtesy of Portland State University Archives Digital Gallery

color photos by Sierra Clark

What would your college experience be like without a severe lack of awareness about the cool resources your school has to offer? Because our lives are insane and we're pulled so far in every direction, we hardly get a chance to take advantage of the small percentage of those great resources we do know about. I still don't know why I haven't gone to any of the midterm stress relief with corgis or llamas or whatever other awesome fuzzy creature the PSU Programming Board seems to keep bringing on campus. Also, why haven't I gone to see free movies at 5th Ave Cinema? We want to introduce you to a totally different, lesser-known resource: The Portland State University Library Archives.

Not only is there a massive physical archive, but much of the photographs have been made available online through the University Archives Digital Gallery. We at The Pacific Sentinel are excited to take you on a monthly journey, not Back to the Future, but into PSU's past. We have found a lot of interesting things that we're excited to share with you. Our first brief dip into the archives for this issue has already proved pretty interesting and we hope you'll agree.

—Jake Johnson, Executive Editor

Below is an image taken on Broadway outside the entrance to Smith Memorial Student Union, looking North at a scene of students and other people in period attire watching the construction of the Skybridge that now connects Parking Structure 2 and the University Services building with the Karl Miller Center and crosses Broadway to SMSU and Cramer Hall. It looks like they didn't even have donuts over there on the corner, we aren't sure how they made it out of those dark ages alive.





Nov 14, 1966: Formerly the Health and Physical Education building and Stott Center, now the Viking Pavillion stands in its place.



Dec 29, 2018



Aug 15, 1966: The Skybridge connects Portland State College Center (SMSU) and South Park Hall (Neuberger). Neuberger seems to be missing half of its building on the Broadway side.



Dec 29, 2018



Aug 18, 1970: Lincoln Hall and downtown Portland's skyline. The immediate scene is obstructed but familiar. The skyline, however, has definitely changed.



Dec 29, 2018

Mysteries, Murders, and Mayhem in 2018

New books by King, French, and Unger illuminate the latest creeping horrors

by Matthew Neil Andrews
illustrations by Jake Johnson



Stephen King: *The Outsider* and *Elevation*

It's probably been awhile since you read Stephen King. Me, I had to take a break after *The Dark Tower* came to its epic and bizarre conclusion over a decade ago. I've been catching up here and there, though, and the prolific author kept up his usual routine: Some of his books are okay, some are grand, some are great. *Revival*, published in 2014, is a modern-day *Frankenstein*-ish tale with a long, mysterious narrative arc that reminded me of Mitch Albom's rather different *Magic Strings of Frankie Presto*. This year's big one, *The Outsider*, is slightly connected to the Bill Hodges Trilogy (*Mr. Mercedes*, etc.) and starts as a wonderfully Kingly take on the gruesome police procedural genre (with a nod to Harlan Coben) before veering satisfyingly into more customary band-of-misfits-slay-a-monster-in-a-cave genre. And his most recent offering, the novella *Elevation*, is his second book of 2018 and one of the best little books I've ever read from Grampa Steve.

King has gotten a lot better at all of this. Rock stars and politicians tend to corrupt with age, putrefying like rotten corpses infested with something eldritch and horrible—like in a Stephen King book—but writers tend to either peak and crash early on or else mature gloriously. King is no exception, and the way he handles all these different kinds of stories has benefitted from 50 years of professional experience. He's never shed the cheesiness (which means he never wanted to and never will; and fuck ya very kindly

if you think he should do otherwise) but his feel for stuff like pacing, setting, and character has grown in the years since horror punk fluff like *Carrie* and *Christine* and *Cujo*.

His greatest strengths were always with mood and theme, the sister goddesses of Sense and Meaning, whose magical charms can transmute any story, however pulpy, into Literature. King's been headed this way for a long time, struggling against the shame of tacky sci-fi and horror and fantasy and all the universally derided realms of cheap paperbacks and men's magazines; that struggle has sharpened him, as it has so many writers before him (Vonnegut and Melville come to mind), and that's how he snuck up on us and became one of our greatest living authors.

That brings us to his slender parable, *Elevation*. The word itself anchors the story, tying its various meanings into a near-perfect novella of the United States in 2018. A guy named Scott goes to his doctor about a mysterious condition: He's losing weight but not mass. From there, we get into the guy's small-town life (he lives, of course, in Castle Rock, but if there are Easter Eggs for the show I didn't spot them, because I don't watch television #sorrynotsorry). He comes into conflict with his neighbors, a couple from the city who have the audacity to think they can enjoy the comforts of country life. As he resolves that conflict, it spreads to the whole town, but not in a mysterious way. King's gift, as always, is to normalize the horrific and horrible-ize the mundane; which he does here with the deft touch of someone who's been doing it for five damn decades and got pretty good at it sometime after the first hundred million copies sold.

King also got a lot better when he got sober in the late '80s, and although that watershed moment is now closer to his career's beginning than its end, it continues to echo through his work. In *Elevation*, Scott's sense of elevation comes from being freed of restrictions, a freedom which will ruin him in the end, but which he is determined to take advantage of in the meantime. He loses his comfort and his fear of his small-town community, and that empowers him to defend his new neighbors against his old ones, and he discovers what all good people

discover eventually: that doing good feels great. Doing good gets you high.

There's a mood of supernatural dread running all through the story, and more than a few truly horrifying moments; if you've ever been seriously ill or been around someone who has (that's probably most of us over thirty) you're in for a rough ride. But Scott's ecstatic embrace of the terror overcoming him is fueled by the book's theme, the runner's high that comes from social bonding and mutual support and acts of courage and determination; by the time Scott's horror comes to its inevitable resolution, we've had to a rethink a few things about acceptance and resistance and the glorious rapture that comes from knowing what you want, knowing what's right, and taking a stand.

Tana French: *The Witch Elm*

If you haven't jumped on the Tana French train yet, it's time. The hot-shit Irish crime novelist has finally published a standalone book, unconnected to her series featuring the Dublin Murder Squad, and it's fucking great. The connected books aren't dependent on each other (you can read them in order; I did)—but, if you want a fresh start and a good entry into her world of deception and intrigue, you could do worse than start with her latest, *The Witch Elm*.

French's first great gift is how deftly she portrays paranoia, suspicion, deceit, and manipulation. Most of the time, she's watching the detectives; we look over their shoulders as they try to unwind some terrible and mysterious crime, teasing out clues and interviewing witnesses and trapping suspects and, well, y'know, all that detective shit. French flips the perspective in *The Witch Elm*, shifting to first-person narrative with an unreliable narrator (facilitated by the customary bump to the head). You'll take the narrator's side, for a while, but then French puts on her Agatha Christie hat and gets you questioning the narrator, his family, his girlfriend, his job, everyone around him.

Once they're out of the spotlight, those heroic homicide detectives become rather sinister: they slip into our narrator's broken head and start monkeying around, messing with him, driving



wedges between him and his family, starting an internal war. And French's genius is such that for almost the entire book we don't know whether the cops are fucking with him because they think he's the murderer or are just using him to get to whomever they really suspect. Our guy lives in a state of agitated, guilty confusion—partly from the obligatory head injury, partly from the equally obligatory fucked up family—and the detectives exploit all that to get their job done.

French's other great gift is that, under her tightly constructed crime plots, she is a classically elegant Irish storyteller with all the cynical wit that is our Gaelic inheritance. Throughout *The Witch Elm* I was reminded of other Irish mysteries, most especially Flann O'Brien's *The Third Policeman*, one of the greatest novels of all time (fight me, Joyce junkies) and a similarly confused tale of guilt and murder. Then there's an old family house (with all its deep mysteries and dark secrets), where a wily old uncle loses his mind and works on genealogies while taking care of the narrator as he recovers from his plot-crucial brain wound; a pair of broken men struggling against secrecy and sorrow and the simple fact that neither can be sure of what's really going on. There's a couple of cousins who are more like siblings, and as they all hang around together smoking hash and teasing each other and playing who's the murderer you get to know these three pretty well. Behind all that, there's family drama and Irish history: that oh-so-recent civil war pops up frequently in French's fiction, as it surely must do in the lives of people who live there, people for whom such terrors are not distant past but living history (here's where Irish literature is a lot like Latin American literature).

The Witch Elm takes its time getting going—lots of mundane city life and art world intrigue and general scene-setting, interesting but slow-paced—but once it takes off (when they finally find the skull that French mentioned back on page two) it bounces inexorably toward

its conclusion like a corpse tumbling down a staircase. French's cynicism is tempered by a kind eye toward her characters' humanity, and as the story's many mysterious twists and turnings play out with crushing, conflicted awfulness, it is that charmingly melancholy tenderness that makes the whole experience so satisfying.

Craig Unger:
House of Trump, House of Putin

There's a pretty good chance you've already made up your mind about Trump and Russia and so on. I won't lie and tell you Craig Unger is neutral in his latest book, *House of Trump, House of Putin*. As with Unger's *House of Bush, House of Saud*, it would be hard to face all these facts and remain neutral. But if you're looking for a single volume that will give you some basic background, without a bunch of politicizing and polemics, Unger's your man.

The book traces a few different histories. Even setting aside the Trump connections, it's a fascinating glimpse into an archipelago of corruption and intrigue that stretches back to the final decade or so of the first cold war (you know we're living in the second cold war right now, yeah?). Unger follows a handful of key figures from their '80s beginnings forward, and many of those names are very familiar, or are about to be. I don't just mean Manafort and Cohen and the other dudes who are finally starting to get locked up—although those guys are in the book too. No, Unger's primary cast includes a whole slew of Russian oligarchs, intelligence agents, politicians, journalists, and international criminals: Semion Mogilevich, Felix Sater, Vyacheslav Ivankov, Rabbi Berel Lazar, Vitaly Malkin, Oleg Deripaska, Igor Sechin, Sergei Magnitsky, Alexander Litvinenko, Dmytro Firtash, Anatoly Sobchak, Gennady Timchenko, Tamir Sapir, Tefvik Arif, David Bogatin, Anatoly Rakhlin, Arkady Rotenberg, and so on. There's a handy list of names in the appendix, fifty-nine of them: the

ones connected to Trump.

Unger lays out this whole post-Soviet development as a way of illustrating how Putin got where he is: by unifying the three powers: state bureaucracy and intelligence apparatus, international crime networks, and multinational industrial corporations. If you've looked into the Russian politician at all, you already know this story, but Unger's outline of the key players and how their strategies have evolved over the last four decades is pretty handy. The short version is simple enough: as the Cold War ended, Putin "retired" from the KGB, got connected to the Russian Mafia (via his judo teacher), and got himself a bland bureaucratic job with the Mayor's Office of St. Petersburg—a job that just happened to give him the power to grant and withhold business favors during Russia's post-Soviet restructuring. From there it's a long string of rich criminals and dead journalists.

At this point, it doesn't matter that much what you and I believe about Trump's actual involvement with Russia. Probably nothing good will come of any of this, whichever way it turns out. But hopefully you're aware that, not only our elections, but our whole society has been tampered with by well-funded and highly skilled groups of professional saboteurs with decades of experience; hopefully you're also aware that behind the self-congratulatory masks that our wealthy elite like to wear, there are always sinister stories of blackmail and corruption that tell the true tales of power (this, of course, is also true of the Clintons, the Bushes, et alia). Unger makes a pretty good case that this sordid realm of money laundering, tax evasion, governmental corruption, and all the rest are not in any sense unconnected to Trump and his world; in fact, he makes a pretty good case that all this is exactly who our current President is and always has been.



The House of the Rising Sun Ra

by Jake Johnson

photos by Jon Bordas

Showcasing the expansive wonder of Sun Ra at the Portland Art Museum, no simple task. The show closed out a series of five shows exploring each word in the series' title: *We. Construct. Marvels. Between. Monuments*. Each of the shows sought to bring institutional critique to the top floor of PAM's Modern and Contemporary Art wing. Specifically, visiting artistic director Libby Werbel has appeared to hold the fine art world's lack of inclusion at the forefront of the series as a paramount message for visitors and through very specific programming hoped to make the historically upper-class-straight-white-people atmosphere of an art museum more accessible and inviting to everyone, regardless of their gender identities, socio-economic, or racial backgrounds.

Werbel brought in cosmic women organizers Deep Underground to assist in providing vision and curation to the Sun Ra exhibit. DUG asserts *Monuments* is a way to begin the work of elevating Black and Brown thinkers, artists, and musicians to help offset colonial biases of the United States. One of their opening statements also brings up the tendency to thank oppressors for progress toward liberation; specifically referencing Abraham Lincoln freeing the slaves but that "No. The enslaved people FOUGHT AND DIED to free themselves."

My first breeze through *Monuments* didn't leave me feeling much. I had been to see *Marvels* when it was around and was really impressed by both the works on display and the concepts and processes that brought them to life. *Marvels'* secondary title was not *MoMA*, a reference to the fact that the works were recreations of works from New York's Museum of Modern Art. The works were created by high school students who had only seen the works online and produced reproductions with whatever materials available to them in whatever ways made most sense. I wish I didn't know the work was made by high school students who underwent this process. But if I stumbled across the work from that show in a museum, would I have still been impressed? Which was probably part of the point of the show in the first place: The art world is for everyone—if everyone had that magical access that bridges the gap between Saturday Market and PAM.

At *Monuments* I noticed the sweet golden bust of Sun Ra

modeled after *Space Is the Place* surrounded by houseplants, and appreciated the nod to Fred Wilson's *Mining the Museum*—in Wilson's show, several busts of white people existed but there was a noticeable lack of people of color celebrated in sculpture despite people of color doing a lot of noteworthy things. Ra's bust reminded me of Kehinde Wiley's sculpture a couple floors below and Wiley's deliberate work to celebrate Black people through deliberate conversations with, and uses of artistic traditions and classical poses that have not historically included them. Heavy topics but a great choice given the exhibition's *Monuments* title. I wandered through the exhibit. I saw some outfits, records, and videos of Sun Ra bein' a spacey jazz-man. I saw some listening stations, photos, and weird instruments used in Sun Ra's Arkestra, it was cool, but it felt surface-level and kitschy.

I was familiar with Sun Ra before I came. Not that I knew a ton about his work or had clocked hundreds of hours listening to his discography; but I'd seen videos of Arkestra rehearsals and performances. I've spent time around a lot of musicians and knew how prolific and well renowned the spaceman was.

On my second visit, I gave the exhibit more than a surface-level examination and had a much different experience. I came with my BFA class—this translates to: I had to be in the Sun Ra exhibit for nearly two hours. I was forced to take time with the exhibit for about an hour before we would chat with Werbel about the exhibit and the series it is a part of. Sometimes all it takes is the introductory exhibition statement. Sometimes you have to be in the right mood. Maybe for me it was both, who knows.

The legacy of Sun Ra

The legend goes that Herman Poole Blount was born in 1914; but that when Blount traveled to space in 1934, Blount ceased activity. Returning from Saturn came Sun Ra as we know him today.

While reading the opening statement, I came across the line: "This exhibition highlights Sun Ra's idea of an 'altered destiny,' a utopian belief that a more meaningful and just world awaits humanity in Outer Space." My heart sank. Yeah, Ra established the core of his identity in the 1930s and 1940s in the south. He died in '93. War, segregation, oppression, sabotage, of course I would want to look elsewhere for justice if I lived most of my life under those conditions.

My heart sank further. It's 2019. The United States spent its first hours of the year firing tear gas at



migrants who didn't want to wait months for their asylum claims to be heard. The Lloyd Center Doubletree called police on a Black guest staying at the hotel because he made a phone call in the corner of the lobby; after verifying the man wasn't loitering, the hotel and police removed the man from the hotel without refunding him the money he paid to stay at the hotel where he was making a call on his cell phone from. The stories always continue and get worse. Two children have died in Customs and Border Protection custody. Earth is maybe not such a great spot. Especially if you're not rich and white.

"To Sun Ra, Outer Space was not an escapist fantasy—it was a place where society, culture, and systems are reimagined to give power to the oppressed," the statement continued. My heart dropped again. Sun Ra's primary message was to create a more meaningful and just existence for black and brown identities—I didn't know that, I knew him as the space-man with a prolific crew of free-jazz musicians who had the chops to blow for hours. In 1934 Ra, landed on the Earth with a message of justice from Saturn for the sake of humanity. 59 years later when he ceased activity on this planet, was he happy? Hopeful? Depressed? Broken-hearted? What does Ra, on whatever dimension or planet he is currently active, think about the state of humanity on Earth in 2019, 26 years after his departure?

Ra had hoped to spread empowerment and "give [Black people] something so they will realize that the Creator hasn't forgotten them." This intentionality behind Ra's art, is what gives the work and the music its cosmic power, and probably was the driving force that motivated him to lead his Arkestra with such a feverish need to keep rehearsing. To create like your freedom and the fate of humanity depended on it—all while maintaining a zen like state, perhaps out of necessity to avoid burnout and be able to continue to work for decades.

Putting my nose a little closer to the titles and documents, I read Ra's application to NASA's Programs of Artistic Merit In Space, seemed like a perfect match; looking at the hand printed, painted, and drawn record covers, and thinking about what it means to release 228 full length albums in a lifetime; and watching his musicians ask him when they can take a break from rehearsal because they've already been going for such a long time, but Ra hardly looks up because the fate of humanity demands that they all push forward.

Oppression at the Portland Art Museum

Sun Ra's quest for justice in the face of United States' oppression made me think of the different forms and various forms that oppression take. A couple floors below the Ra exhibit is a photography exhibit about life under Nazi rule. Henryk Ross took photographs of life in the Lodz Ghetto in Poland. These photographs are on display at PAM for *Memory Unearthed*. Some show Jews standing behind barbed wire, working, transporting feces, and in some of the photos seeming to have a good time in spite of it all. Ross was hired to document life in the Ghetto initially, but the mood changed and Ross buried his negatives to be able to show the world what had happened there. Lodz was occupied by the Germans in 1939, 5 years after Ra became active on earth. Initially the Lodz Ghetto contained 160,000 trapped Jewish residents. Only 877 Jews were alive in the Lodz Ghetto when it was liberated in 1945.

From the 1970s to 1990s over 90,000 Ethiopian Jews migrated to Israel to escape persecution, famine, and war. Unfortunately, although they, too, were Jewish, the Ethiopians ended up finding oppression and racism. leave the country.

Kehinde Wiley's sculpture at PAM is a bust of one of these Ethiopian Jews. While Wiley was recently in the spotlight for his contemporary painted portrait of President Obama. Wiley met the sculpture's model in

Tel Aviv—Wiley's portraits tend to showcase normal people, celebrities and political figures are out of the ordinary. *Likunt Daniel Ailin* has a presence, a skepticism, and a pride. There is a tangible power in Ailin's face and posture as the statue asks in Hebrew, "What would make it possible for us to live together?" The bust is wearing traditional Ethiopian clothing and has a Black fist hair pick in his hair.

It's a tough question to answer. But these exhibitions are enlightening. Ross's photography exhibit features photographs he had to bury for us to see. Sun Ra spent his entire life trying to show Black people that they matter. Part of the funding Werbel was given for this exhibition series went to collaborating with other groups, such as DUG. Sun Ra's exhibition was largely supposed to be presented in his words or in ways that Ra would have appreciated and agreed with. Like Fazal Sheikh's affecting show *Common Ground*, *Monuments* realized the power of trying to present information better and considering the people. Henryk Ross, Sun Ra, and Likunt Daniel Ailin all have stories to tell and some of them are able to tell the story for themselves. If they're able to tell their own story, why should we think we're better spokespeople than the subjects we display in our exhibitions?

Werbel seemed tired. *We Construct. Marvels. Between. Monuments* is nearly over after an ambitious year of programing. Coming into this project Werbel, DUG, PAM, and other collaborators had hoped to make the museum feel more welcoming to diverse audiences. Even after getting a broader range of people into the museum, there still seemed to be a problem: bringing people through the door is only half the battle, making people feel comfortable enough to stay is another large piece of the puzzle. Unfortunately people still have to listen to (typically white) people making insensitive comments once they're inside—probably not because they want to be malicious, but because they don't seem to listen when people try to tell them that they're being insensitive. Experiencing microaggressions doesn't seem like the sort of environment one enjoys going to, to get lost deep in thought. The art world, and the world at large needs to do better. Hopefully, for Ra's sake, we can start turning things around this year.

In 1980 Sun Ra said, "A catalyst comes and changes everything yet it remains unchanged." 84 years after Sun Ra's beginnings of earthly activity, we are still waiting for the just universe to arrive, 45 years after Sun Ra began his work he made that statement. Wherever he is, he's probably shaking his head right now—and then promptly getting back to recording another couple hundred records.

opposite page: *Sun Ra Monument*, 3D printed by Corbin Cornelison and Midori Hirose.

this page, top right: *Likunt Daniel Ailin*, Kehinde Wiley

bottom right: *Jews in the Lodz Ghetto of Poland hauling feces*, by Henryk Ross as part of *Memory Unearthed*.



2018 in Music

Ranking music is tricky business. Music isn't inherently competitive. Different artists set out to make their music with different goals, working within the structures of different traditions, and are successful in different ways.

Music is certainly competitive in the mass commercial space, and 2018 has been an interesting year in that respect. The top 10 most-streamed songs of 2018, according to Hits Daily Double, were all within the realm of hip-hop; compared to 2017's top 10, which included more traditional pop turns: from Ed Sheeran, Bruno Mars, and Justin Bieber and Luis Fonsi ("Despacito"). Hip-hop continues to slowly dominate more and more of whatever we consider "popular music." Drake proved himself an ever-growing pop juggernaut this year, topping the most-streamed list with his hit "God's Plan"—and appearing on four of the top eight. While this may have been hip-hop's year, Spotify noted that Latin music also experienced a steep increase in streaming on their platform in 2018.

I don't think we have a large enough staff here at *The Pacific Sentinel* to create a year-end list of the best albums of 2018 in any just or comprehensive way; but as Arts & Culture editor, I wanted to reflect in some way on what, to me, was a very interesting year in music. So, our coverage of 2018 in music is divided into two sections. First, I asked our staff and contributors to reflect on a piece of music that affected them in some way this year. Second, I have compiled a diverse list of albums that stood out to me as creative leaps forward for their respective artists.

—Shane Johnson, Arts and Culture Editor

Staff Picks

Ty Segall: *Freedom's Goblin*

by John Bordas

With everything going on in our complex world today, it's really important for me to be able to "tune" out and just indulge in audio experiences whenever I get the chance. *Freedom's Goblin* was the first of three albums that would be released by Ty Segall in 2018. Normally I would be skeptical of the music's quality when so much is being produced in such a short amount of time, but Segall does not disappoint.

This album has a little bit of everything good, in my opinion. I would describe this collection of songs as a big juicy salad bowl containing elements of psych rock, lo-fi, folk, blues, and garage rock. It also has great melodies, catchy lyrics, love songs, break-up songs, songs about who-knows-what, screaming, soft whispers, big drums, loud brass, electric guitars, acoustic guitars, gritty guitars, clean guitars, guitar solos, guitar duos, keyboard solos, and even distorted saxophone solos! There are fast songs, slow songs, inbetweens, up-n-downers, songs that will make you think, and ones that will just make you feel. You'll laugh, you'll cry, and then you'll smile. If you weren't already on the Ty Train before, this album should be your one-way ticket (to Pleasure Town).

Mattress

by Margo Craig

Mattress is the one-man show that you need and needs you. The seasoned performer croons, "I'm just looking for my friends." Donned in a gold-sequined tuxedo dinner jacket and patent leather loafers, he shuffles, slides, shimmies and sashays across a stripped-down stage to plunky beats and catchy synth-pop hooks. The music, like the show, is somehow both reminiscent and timeless. He's like a weird cousin to Alan Vega, Nick Cave, Bowie and Byrne, but he's been stuck in an apocalypse, showboating just to survive, ever since he lost his Vegas rat-pack in 1979.

"Me and you / Ah! / We are post-human human!" He coyly tosses the mic between hands, whips the cable around, throws his head back and lets out a guttural "Oh!" Turn your eyes and ears to the sparkling man bathed in neons from a bare-bones light show, illuminated and framed by shadows. Go ahead, bob your head to the beat of impending doom, because Mattress is already there singing to you: "Fuck the future!" For bonus intrigue, he moonlights as a librarian at PSU.

illustration of Mattress by Josh Gates



Angelo De Augustine: *Carcassonne* EP

by Shane Johnson

"Asleep with the morning light, walking you home," begins Angelo De Augustine on "Carcassonne," the first track on his two-song EP of the same name that I slowly fell in love with this year. *Carcassonne* contains a perfect pair of tracks that compliment each other in subtle ways. The EP in some ways feels like an ode to contentment, with both songs hovering in the present moment, even as they reflect on the passage of time in different ways. "I forgot the past and all its woes," the singer croons over gentle, humming guitar strings, before addressing his lover: "You help me realize, / there ain't much time in life before the lights go down, / so I want to hold you now."

"Carcassonne" is in many ways one of the best love songs of the year: patient, thoughtful, and very sweet. The second track, "Effervescent Islands" mirrors the first in its opening lines, beginning "up with the morning light, covered in calico," but explores more abstract imagery over an echoing piano. De Augustine's warm voice is gentle and gorgeous on both tracks, but the real stars are his articulately crafted melodies, which cycle through a variety of lifts and falls throughout the various verses, pre-choruses, choruses, and bridges. I listened to both songs while I was in England for the first time this summer, a fitting soundtrack to gazing over pastoral fields from train windows and laying under the warm sun in Regent's Park.

The 1975: *A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships*

by Sydney McBee

A Brief Inquiry Into Online Relationships is The 1975's newest album, but features a third rendition of their first album's title track, "How to Draw." The album ranges from a couple acoustic pieces as well as a handful of very poppy tunes. The 1975 makes music for music's sake. This album contains lighthearted pop music, heroin addiction themes, an 80's ballad, experimental instrumental Kanye-esque pieces, and a political pop-rock rendition. Although all of the music is not only different than anything they've done previously, each of the album's songs are also different from each other.

One of my favorite things about this band is their creativity with intermission songs. "The Man Who Married a Robot" is their ode to a song by Radiohead titled "Fitter Happier," featuring a Siri voice that's eerily disturbing. My personal favorite on the album was "Love It If We Made It," a song where the lead singer Matty Healy uses a different style of vocals than the rest of the album, and uses tabloids collected through the year to make a political statement, partially about Trump, despite the fact that the band is British. The album is a fresh start to their next era, bringing us blasts from the past and new wave sounds in a way that only The 1975 can do.

Kacey Musgraves: *Golden Hour*

by Jesse Trott

Kacey Musgraves' *Golden Hour* is a combination of pop and country music unlike any other albums. In today's music culture, true country is slowly fading out as pop-country is emerging, bringing Musgraves along with it. But she is doing it slightly different than the other artists. She is telling a story, painting a picture, and making me feel with every single one of her songs. *Golden Hour* is the perfect mixture of happy, sad, slow, upbeat, and love songs; there is a song for everyone.

Some of my personal favorites off the album were "Space Cowboy" and "Velvet Elvis." "Space Cowboy" evokes the feeling of happiness and makes me want to get up and dance every single time. Musgraves' voice on "Velvet Elvis" makes me take a step back and truly appreciate her talent. We can thank Musgraves for breathing a fresh air of authenticity into a genre of music that has relied on formulaic output with little emotion to produce high grossing albums. In a genre where fans expect the same old, same old, she is bringing it back to the days of rebelliousness.

Jim James: "Over and Over"

by Jake Johnson

This year's been wild. Every day the news makes it seem like humanity is surely doomed. I constantly ask myself, "haven't we been here before?! I thought we had moved past this?! Aren't we better than this?!" Jim James seems to have been asking himself the same question with this year's single, "Over and Over," from the album *Uniform Distortion*. The lyrics are pointed, "We drop the same bombs (on and on) / Put up the same walls (on and on) / We block the same roads / over and over again."

The sonic aesthetics of the song are reminiscent of Weezer's depressed journey through *Pinkerton*—even the guitar solo has Rivers Cuomo's style all over it. "Over and Over" sounds like an anthem for the mental state I've been in for the past two years. There's a specific syncopation where the song itself is bouncy but still feels a little like just putting one foot in front of the other and trying not to run into a sign pole because you've been slamming your face into your palm over and over again that really resonates with me. "How can we make / the same mistakes we made yesterday? / Have we learned nothin' at all?"



illustration of
Kacey Musgraves
by Josh Gates



Ice Cube: *Everything's Corrupt*

by Cory 'Matrix' Elia

It has been a year of amazing musical releases, however my favorite amongst them all would have to be a recent release by Ice Cube entitled "Arrest The President" on his latest album *Everything's Corrupt*. In it, Cube suggests the Mueller investigation already has the evidence against our current presidential administration, and specifically that Teflon Don himself is a Russian agent. Cube asserts that orange is the new white. Besides interesting lyrical choices made by the artist, it is all recorded over what this journalist suggests is the fattest beat to be used in rap or hip-hop for quite a while and easily lives up to the level of acumen Ice Cube and the former group N.W.A. upheld in their music.

A close second would have to be a track from the same album entitled "Chase Down the Bully" where he states that while the alt-right says they're all about law and order, they actually systematically assault reporters and journalists and their rhetoric is that of pure hate speech. From the album's intro skit, "Super OG," to song that shares its name with the album: "Everything's Corrupt," to "Good Cop, Bad Cop," the entire album is worth listening to as long as you can handle gangsta rap with a little cussing and the occasional N-word.

illustration of Officer Cube arresting the president by Josh Gates

Queen's Greatest Hits

by Daniel J. Nickolas

The fact that there exists a substantial amount of stagnation in many musical genres, especially among top 40 music, has been a major complaint for music lovers of all genres and backgrounds for a long time. However, with the original musical style, beautifully odd lyrics, tight vocal harmonies, and incredible lead vocals of Freddy Mercury, the music of the band Queen sounds as original today as it did when it was first written. The success of the 2018 film, *Bohemian Rhapsody* has introduced the story and music of Queen to new generations of music lovers, and I can only imagine that many of them are grateful to the movie for having done so. The longevity of Queen's music is not only due to the incredible talent of its band members, but to the genuine work and passion that the band put into their music.

While greatest hits albums are usually aimed at less-serious fans of an artist, such albums are nonetheless a great way for one to acquaint themselves with an artist that is new to them. Many of Queen's songs have become culturally ubiquitous, and as a result, many greatest hits albums have been produced, and thanks to the 2018 film, many more are likely to come; luckily, the quality and uniqueness of Queen's music means that no collection of their music is inherently better than another. If you're interested in wonderfully written and expertly performed songs, that at the same time are infused with a strong sense of originality—heck, even if you don't care that much for originality, and just want something you can sing along with—Queen's music is undoubtedly worth your time.

Musical Leaps Forward

by Shane Johnson

Looking back on the year in music, I noticed there were many albums that I would classify as musical leaps forward for their respective artists. Whether they were young artists releasing their strongest creative statement to date, established artists finally meeting their potential, or bold creative shifts, this list features 11 albums from 2018 where each artist has significantly surpassed their previous work to release something truly impressive. These albums range from hip-hop to pop, post-punk to soul, and are listed in no particular order.

Mitski: *Be the Cowboy*

After two albums of highly successful experimentation in distortion-heavy indie rock that earned Mitski scores of fans and critical acclaim, *Be the Cowboy* throws that formula out the window. Mitski further distanced herself from her previous songwriting subjects and abandoned many of her previous production choices, expanding her sound to include a diverse array of instrumentation that flirts with disco, electronic, and country stylings. This choice could have been disastrous in less capable hands. But for Mitski, the effect is an explosive expansion of what defines a Mitski project, improving upon many of her strengths while covering new ground. Longtime collaborator Patrick Hyland's guitarwork and production sounds just as crisp and beautiful as ever, while Mitski's voice is clearer and more central in the mix. Above all, the songs on *Be the Cowboy* are a masterclass in punchy, efficient songwriting; most clock in around the two-minute mark, and many ditch traditional hooks for more experimental song structures that, nonetheless, managed to be some of the most memorable and catchy songs of the year.

Teyana Taylor: *K.T.S.E.*

Teyana Taylor has existed on the margins of popular R&B and hip-hop for years. Appearing on Kanye West's seminal 2010 album *My Beautiful Dark Twisted Fantasy*, and later signing to his GOOD Music imprint. It took until this year, with the release of her second album *K.T.S.E.*, for Taylor to finally have her breakout moment; the highlight of Kanye West's Wyoming sessions, the album features some of Kanye's most soulful production in years, but at the center of the album is Taylor's warm, powerful vocals. "Gonna Love Me" is the crown jewel of the album, a soaring song of persevering through love's tribulations built upon an excellent Delfonics sample. *K.T.S.E.*'s greatest accomplishment is, in less than 23 minutes, redefining Teyana Taylor from a talented bench player on a hip-hop label to a singular, distinct voice in contemporary R&B.

Saba: *CARE FOR ME*

I previously reviewed Chicago rapper Saba's sophomore album in *The Pacific Sentinel's* April/May issue—which you can refer to for more detail—but the long and short of it is this: *CARE FOR ME* catapults Saba from promising newcomer to one of the most engaging talents in current hip-hop. Saba co-produced the album himself, which distills jazzy instrumentation with contemporary trap production, over which he demonstrates mastery of his vocals, weaving in and out of an impressive variety of flows and inflections. Most significantly, *CARE FOR ME* is a highly affecting meditation on grief, centered around the tragic murder of Saba's cousin and musical collaborator John Walt in early 2017. Over the course of the album, Saba slowly combines deft personal storytelling together with larger reflections on trauma, the artistic process, and the alienation of being black in America. *CARE FOR ME* is a touching tribute to his cousin and a triumphant musical testament to Saba's passion for hip-hop that is sure to become a future classic.





Swamp Dogg: *Love, Loss & Autotune*

Love, Loss & Autotune is not an album you'd ordinarily expect from an artist whose debut album was released nearly 50 years ago, but Swamp Dogg has never been ordinary. (Take a look at the cover of his 1971 album *Rat On!* to get an idea.) The 76-year-old crooner sent rough versions of the album's tracks to producer Ryan Olsen with the request that he "didn't want it to sound like Swamp Dogg." Olsen deconstructed the songs alongside Justin Vernon of Bon Iver who further altered the singer's vocals. The resulting album is surprisingly eclectic and powerful, as the pair bends and warps Swamp Dogg's voice in compelling ways, without ever losing the emotional core of his soulful songs.

Amen Dunes: *Freedom*

Freedom was the most exciting musical surprise of the year for me. Damon McMahon has been making music as Amen Dunes since 2006, but *Freedom*, his fifth album, is an unequivocal breakthrough. Mostly abandoning the folk rock style of his previous work, McMahon gathered a group of collaborators to create a unique pastiche of American rock traditions, with hints of everything from Springsteen to psychedelic surf rock. The end result is a unique and surprisingly danceable album of soaring beauty. McMahon has a voice all his own, timelessly distinct in a Dylan-like way, and he stretches out his lyrics in peculiar, unconventional ways. Nearly every song feels like a highlight, but "Miki Dora" perhaps stands the tallest—a groovy, slow climax of a track at the center of the album that subtly dissects the myths of hyper-masculine hero figures (a recurring theme) through famed surfer Miki Dora. McMahon's delivery may obscure some of his lyrics at first, but it's worth delving into them. *Freedom* is nothing short of McMahon's magnum opus, a musical moment in which all the right elements and ideas have combined to showcase the artist's talent in full.

Lupe Fiasco: *DROGAS WAVE*

The cover of Lupe Fiasco's seventh album, *DROGAS WAVE*, appears to be an abstract image of shape and shadow at first glance, but is actually a Manilla, a metal bracelet used as a form of currency in the Atlantic Slave Trade. Similarly, the songs that inhabit the album explore abstract themes through specific, intricate stories and wordplay. This is not the most flawless album on this list—it feels a bit overlong at times—but it is significant because it is Lupe's first album after leaving Atlantic Records, and in many ways feels like the album he has been wanting to make for the better part of a decade. Lupe is in top form lyrically, and his producers have created a lush, engaging soundscape to accompany his intricate lyrics. *DROGAS WAVE* begins as a concept album, tracking the brutal reality of the slave trade through a fantastical narrative about former slaves who live on the Atlantic seafloor and work to sink passing slave ships, before thematically spiraling out to explore various conceptual iterations of waves and slavery in the modern world. This sounds like too complicated a concept to stick the landing on, but somehow Lupe pulls it off. At its best, *DROGAS WAVE* is an impressive melding of lyricism and emotion, made by an artist at the peak of his powers. After years of infamous creative disagreements with his label, Lupe himself is finally free, and you can hear it.

illustration of Swamp Dogg by Josh Gates



Car Seat Headrest: *Twin Fantasy (Face to Face)*

I wasn't particularly compelled by either of Car Seat Headrest's previous two competent rock albums, but the band's 2018 release completely hooked me quickly. *Twin Fantasy (Face to Face)* finds Will Toledo, lead singer and songwriter, reworking and re-recording his 2011 album *Twin Fantasy in full*. The unique dynamic of a successful artist revisiting an album they wrote as a 19-year-old creates a very compelling tension within the music. 2011 Toledo's lyrics capture heartache in impressively nuanced and authentic terms, and 2018 Toledo's vocals and guitar arrangements breathe a gorgeous fullness into the songs.

Toledo has long seemed to have ambitions of greatness and this is the first Car Seat Headrest album to meet that benchmark. "Give me Frank Ocean's voice and James Brown's stage presence, and I will be your rock god," he sings on "Cute Thing." Toledo and his music are quite different from Frank Ocean in most respects, but one trait he shares is the ability to successfully render the fuzzy emotions of memories and nostalgia through acute, anecdotal details and casually poetic language. Toledo is far from a rock god, but it's the raw, imperfect humanity bleeding through *Twin Fantasy (Face to Face)* which makes it among the best releases of the year.

MGMT: *Little Dark Age*

MGMT's 2007 debut album *Oracular Spectacular* introduced the world to iconic electronic indie-pop hits such as "Electric Feel" and "Kids," before intentionally distancing themselves from the sound that brought them success. The duo's first album in five years, *Little Dark Age* plays as a return to form, but on their own terms. The album's first four tracks are among the most creative and danceable pop songs of the year. A weirdness pervades the album's entire aesthetic, incorporated in small ways such as maniacal

laughter in the background of "When You Die," but is balanced with a rare sense of humor, best on display in the opening track, about a relationship falling apart due to one partner's lack of physical activity. The duo was halfway through writing the album when Donald Trump was elected president, and the sinister presence of the current administration is reflected through the album. "I grieve in stereo, / The stereo sounds strange. / I know that if you hide, / It doesn't go away," they sing on the gothic synth-pop title track. With *Little Dark Age*, MGMT have created their strongest work yet, fusing their talent for catchy songwriting with their best experimental impulses to create one of the most memorable pop albums of the year.

ARTHUR: *Woof Woof*

Woof Woof is one of the weirdest albums of the year, by a solid margin, but it is also one of the most creative and bold artistic visions, proving that the experimental pop singles ARTHUR has released over the last two years are no fluke. ARTHUR's chronically short songs (many clocking in around a minute) feature pitch-shifted vocals, infectiously bouncy bass lines, and an eclectic array of electronic sounds. His lyrics are similarly unique, inhabiting an array of creative metaphors and perspectives. *Woof Woof* is perhaps the lowest-profile project on this list, and the only reason I'm aware of it is because Frank Ocean has previously played ARTHUR on his radio show. But for music so unconventional, it has surprisingly broad appeal. Hopefully it can reach a wider audience, because ARTHUR is waiting, his musical voice fully formed.

Ought: *Room Inside the World*

Ought released two solid, surprisingly optimistic post-punk albums back-to-back in 2014 and 2015, but *Room Inside the World* represents a successful expanding and polishing of their sound. One of the album's most significant features is the evolution of lead singer Tim Darcy's vocals. While Ought's previous albums featured Darcy blurring the line between speaking and singing, *Room Inside the World* finds his voice inflecting a low, charismatic wail, like Elvis doing a Morrissey impression; or perhaps more accurately, like King Krule by way of David Byrne. Strings, horns, electronics, and even a choir make appearances across the album, but the guitar work is still front and center, supplying a sea of noisy, beautiful chords. As always, Darcy's lyrics are memorable and distinct. "Floated around downtown. / I floated around Spain. / I was like a dentist, rooting for pain," he sings on the danceable "Disgraced In America." *Room Inside the World* presents a more powerful—and more beautiful—version of Ought, and the band deserves to earn more attention because of it.

Adrienne Lenker: *abysskiss*

Adrienne Lenker is perhaps best recognized as the lead singer of the band Big Thief, whose 2017 album was featured in many year-end lists. Lenker has previously released solo material, but *abysskiss* feels like her full realization as a solo artist. Lenker's gift for melody is on full display here, as she weaves ten gorgeous, fluid songs over mostly simple, knotty fingerpicked guitar instrumentals. Her voice is folksy and warm and her music swells with acceptance as her thoughtful, raw lyrics examine life, death, and the love therein, like a ghost hovering above the life it once lived. "See my death become a trail, / and the trail leads to a flower. / I will blossom in your sail, / every dreamed and waking hour," she sings on the opening track. *abysskiss* is a gorgeous album that feels immediately timeless and deserves to be heard.

illustration of Car Seat Headrest by Josh Gates



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