

WORD

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ISLA VISTA ARTS & CULTURE MAGAZINE



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free



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WORDS FROM THE EDITOR



Welcome back to Isla Vista!

The sun is shining, the seagulls are screaming, and spring is officially here. I hope you all had a long, sunny spring break — and if your mini-vacation inspired some wanderlust in you, don't stop exploring now! The warming weather makes spring the best season for adventuring, and we at WORD have some great suggestions for you: take a road trip out to Ojai (*Road-Trippin'*), pick up a new hobby like aerial silks (*Exploring Flow Arts with Katelyn Carano*) or take a glimpse into your future with local mystics (*Psychic Hunting*). Don't be afraid to try something new, as spring is all about growth. Speaking of growth, this year UCSB has made a huge impact in going green, thanks in part to the innovations of Nobel Prize winning UCSB professor Shuji Nakamura, as well as to the development of on-campus initiatives such as the Department of Public Worms and Associated Students Recycling. Take a nature walk with us as we examine UCSB's green impact (*Time To Shine*), explore Isla Vista's topiaries (*Trees*), and learn how to raise flowers, fruits, and herbs and build our very own planters (*DIY Garden*). Make sure to sow some seeds of your own this season — you never know which way you'll grow!

Until next time, WORD up!

Cassandra Miasnikov
Editor-in-Chief



A SPECIAL PROJECT OF UCSB

funded by UCSB & Associated Students

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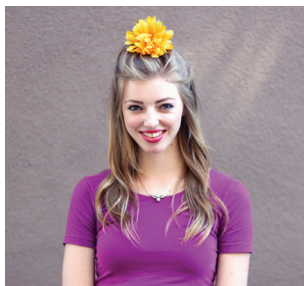
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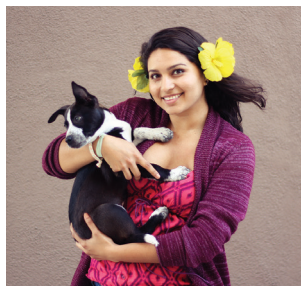
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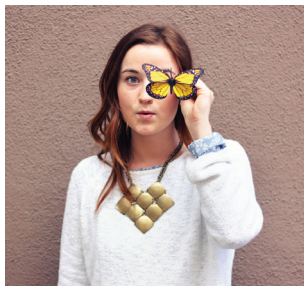
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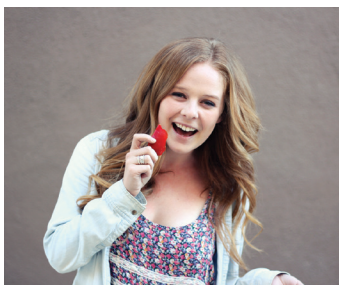
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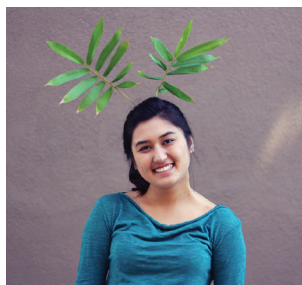
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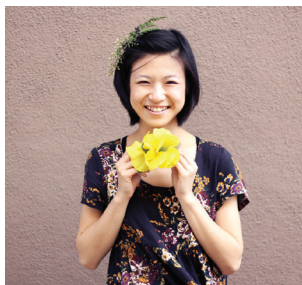


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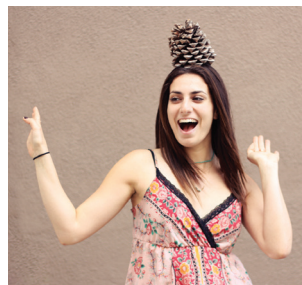


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A REFLECTION on LAST SPRING'S TRAGEDY

words // Parisa Mirzadegan photo // Trevor Mauk design // Julia Marsh

The Isla Vista community is a resilient one—pressing on through assaults, deaths, illness, riots—yet the spring of 2014 put our ability to persevere to a test. May 23, 2014, marked the abrupt loss of six of our community members. We've attempted to make sense of this attack: turning to mental health care, gun laws, the pervasiveness of misogyny. We've tried to process the fear, grief, and anger that spiraled through Isla Vista on that day and in the days and weeks that followed. Now, almost a year later, where are we?

We're still nestled between the Santa Ynez mountains and the big, blue Pacific. We're still biking, walking, and skating to our classes. We're even still crowding DP on weekends, dancing and laughing with friends. But that doesn't mean that we've forgotten. Those who were in Isla Vista on May 23—even those of us whose hearts were here from home or abroad—have been profoundly affected by the terror of that day.

But there has been rebirth in this past year. Community efforts to create safe gathering places and to achieve self-governance have sprung up and flourished. California legislators and impassioned citizens have worked tirelessly to bring attention to the needless violence that has taken place in our community and so many others,





passing several gun control laws in the months since last May. There have been efforts to expand mental health services for the Isla Vista community. Out of violence and terror have emerged hope and regrowth.

Here in Isla Vista, I like to think that we've regained our will to grow, the tenacious push forward that characterizes us. There are still little reminders everywhere—the commemorative boards around campus and IV, the melted candle wax left on the sidewalks from memorials, the bullet hole that remains in the window of Coffee Collab. The jolting sense of loss that comes with these reminders of what happened may never leave us, but the memory is no longer so heavy that it's suffocating.

What we have done is made our insistence on fearlessness into our strength. The shock of losing our sense of security may have made us more cautious, but we are not afraid. With the memories of that day woven into our lives, we are able to push upward and, shaking the dirt off our tired limbs, bloom.

GOOD COP

Sympathy for the Foot Patrol

words // Kelsey Knorp

design // Jacqueline Puga

photography // Michelle

Walk a mile in the shoes of your local foot patrol, and you'll have reached the end of jurisdiction. Keeping order in such a compact, primarily residential corner of Santa Barbara County can't be all that difficult, one might think. In such a small town, naturally, the potential for mayhem must be limited.

Before drawing such conclusions, however, consider this: since the 1990s, Isla Vista Foot Patrol staffing numbers have remained more or less stagnant at around 22 officers. The Isla Vista population, on the other hand, has since grown from around 15,000 residents to the whopping 23,000 of today. As a result, the police force has continuously been faced with the challenge of providing effective community policing to a super-sized community, an unincorporated county pocket that is constantly bursting at its seams.

According to IVFP Lieutenant Plastino, this sharp increase in population has taken a negative toll on the department's relationship with the IV community, because "with that comes increased numbers of crimes that are being committed. So rather than being a patrol, and being able to go out there and interact with the public on a happier basis, we've had to be more of a reactionary force."

This greater instance of crime also poses increased danger to a police force that is becoming steadily more outnumbered as years pass; consequently, the officers must always be alert on duty. As an example, Plastino reflected on the foot pursuit of a drug dealer that had occurred that very morning.

Caught in the act of selling his wares, the dealer dropped his drug scale and other paraphernalia on the spot before bolting off through backyards, over fences, and across parks. Even in such fast-paced chases, an officer must constantly examine and analyze

the situation, on guard and prepared to act swiftly if a perpetrator reveals himself to be armed. Plastino credits these instincts with the immediacy of response to the mass shooting last May, an instance when IV saw the patrol leap into action to contain a deadly threat.

"They're trained to deal with a guy with a gun," said the top cop. "They're trained to deal with people that have unknown weapons on them that we don't know about, and so every encounter is potentially that."

His men and women might be on foot, but they're no mall cops, says Plastino. In fact, he has often found that the need for officers to keep their hostile sides on the back burner when on patrol can translate poorly to the public. Often when Isla Vista residents feel they are being treated unfairly, he says, it is largely because law enforcement officials are trained to treat every unknown situation with caution, as if an unforeseen factor could cause it to escalate at any moment.

"You have to be able to go from zero to 60 in a second if you have to," he said, "but always constantly having that, going back and forth—most [people] can't handle that. You wouldn't be able to deal with that. You'd be on anti-psychotics."

"They've got to be able to be good with people, they have to be good investigators; they have to be able to deal with a serious issue, and then handle a small issue without getting all worked up," Plastino said of the officers he selects. "Everyone that's out here wants to work out here." Contrary to popular belief, he says, IVFP's hiring process is very selective, and no officers are assigned to the station simply because they "got stuck there" or are being punished.



IV officers may be on foot, but they're no mall cops. Real IV Foot Patrol officers featured above.

This includes Plastino, although he did not always plan to pursue a career in law enforcement. As a college undergraduate majoring in business at San Diego State University, Plastino witnessed questionable tactics in his own encounters with police. One advantage of his current position is his power to prevent abuses like those he once saw.

"Now I'm in a position to manage Foot Patrol, and I can make sure that my deputies and officers don't do what I thought was not right," he said. "That's not to say that people don't make mistakes—that deputies and officers out there don't make mistakes—but I can at least control my house to a certain extent."

A love of student life that persisted even after completing his education compelled Plastino to designate IVFP as his first-choice station at the start of his career as a deputy in 1998. After his initial two-year stint on the foot patrol, he served once again from 2004 to 2005 before returning as lieutenant in July 2013.

Sergeant Richard Brittingham joined the department's forces when Plastino became lieutenant and agrees that the officers who serve IV are the best for the job. One trend that makes that job more difficult, however, is student aggression against officers issuing citations. Such violence has become more common over the course of the past year and a half, he says, and is often intensified by the effects of alcohol.

"We'll start with a simple noise violation, and then all of sudden somebody's putting their hands on us," he said. "I don't know where this came from, but we're getting in physical altercations every weekend. So now instead of just a simple ticket, now you've got one or two people going to jail for battery of a police officer."

Deputy Wayne Johnson, who has served Isla Vista for two and half years, has frequently been targeted by such aggression. In large part, he feels it's a consequence of the sheer size of IV's population, which requires unique standards for officer safety.

"When you're writing a ticket, you have a hundred people walking behind you, and a lot of people don't like us out here," he said. "So I've had bottles thrown at me, I've had full cans of beer thrown at me from balconies, I've been hit out here, I've been in a couple fights... just because of the amount of people. It's much more dangerous here than I'd say working other stations [is]."

Despite these encounters, Johnson echoes his lieutenant's concerns about public perceptions of the force and tries to make his impression on Isla Vista residents a positive one. "Having the kids understand that we're not just cops, that we're actually people, is big to me," he said, "and I know that with law enforcement your last contact with a cop is going to be how you view cops."


Despite his acknowledgement of some shortcomings, Plastino speaks proudly of his force's accomplishments. For example, one IVFP deputy recently put together an entire rape case, which ultimately led to the suspect's pleading out in court, without the usual investigative help from Goleta officials. "It gives you an idea of how well-rounded the Foot Patrol deputies are," Plastino said of the case.

These triumphs, however, are often countered by tragedies. One of the most difficult aspects of serving Isla Vista, Plastino says, is mitigating the grief of families who have lost a child here. Standard procedure requires deputies to notify a family in person regarding the death of their loved one, a weighty responsibility.

"HAVING THE KIDS UNDERSTAND THAT WE'RE NOT JUST COPS, THAT WE'RE ACTUALLY PEOPLE, IS BIG TO ME."

"But then that's done, [and] the parents are going to grieve for the rest of their lives," Plastino said. "So a lot of times I'm that connection to Isla Vista, where their loved one died. And so I've dealt with some parents that will never, of course, ever forget this place because of the horrible memory that their son or daughter lost their life out here."

He recalls one mother whose son was killed by a fatal fall from a cliff; she was among the first to approach him with a project to have better fencing built along the cliffs, in order to prevent the similar incidents. She's visited Isla Vista several times to advocate for the new fencing, despite the tragic associations the town now holds for her.

"Every time, I know that her coming out here... she's reliving the moment that her son died," Plastino said. "And you know, that's hard. It's hard for me to see it. It's hard for me to think about losing a loved one like that. So that's the toughest thing." 

BAD COP

Exploring the Line Between Mediation and Instigation

words // Katherine Seganni

design // Spencer Baker

illustration // Cindy Li

Lately I feel the need to call a Campus Security Officer (CSO) to walk me home from Isla Vista parties. Not to save me from the dark or from fear of assault, but to protect me from the police—that is, getting a Minor In Possession (MIP) or public intoxication citation. These citations not only cost a fortune (up to \$675), but they are wielded like batons.

While I'm always grateful to see the cops

when my neighbors are throwing a Wednesday night rager or if a fight breaks out, I'm anxious when I see them while out walking late on a Friday or Saturday night.

Last summer's news was dominated by the events in Ferguson and other cities, where racial profiling and militaristic policing led to public uprisings. After returning to IV this fall in the light of all these televised abuses, I

was struck by the intensity of the police presence here, which seems stronger in the aftermath of the Deltopia riots. While the issue of African Americans being killed by trigger-happy police is much more serious, there are also problems here with the attitude the police have toward Isla Vistans.

The relationship between students and the IV foot patrol has always been strange.

The police here walk the streets among the students instead of waiting for calls. They enter parties in private houses without warrants and often before complaints are registered. The police force even has grenade launchers in its arsenal to deploy as needed. Most problems have to do with partying, according to deputy Neil Gowing from the IV foot patrol station, who was happy to answer questions about the relationship between police and students.

When asked about current police and student relationships, he admitted to harboring "mixed feelings."

"We deal with good kids, they thank us, and then we deal with students [who are] unappreciative, argumentative, combative. We almost feel like they have



an 'us versus them' mentality," said Gowing.

In order to curb alcohol abuse and dismiss the idea that IV is party central, Gowing admits they apply tough love.

"At the beginning of every school year we have a strict zero tolerance policy... because we want people to realize just because there is this idea that in Isla Vista anything goes, it doesn't." Gowing also admits there are more officers on duty at the beginning of each school year and more tickets are given out at this time, too.

Ridding IV of its party culture is important to Gowing, who said that students can help prevent events like the Deltopia riots from happening again by not perpetuating the image of IV as a lawless party pit in person and on social media. A lot of students who live in IV have the idea that out-of-towners are the biggest problem, but Gowing refutes this belief.

"To blame strictly out-of-towners would be ignorant—there are UCSB kids contributing to the problem. The real problem in IV is alcohol abuse and the crimes that result from it," he said.

Students wonder, however, whether blanket ticketing is the best way to deal with a cultural problem. These tickets are often expensive and unfairly enforced. One anonymous student said she received an MIP at a small gathering.

"Of the eight underage people there, only my roommate and I were given citations," she said. It was clearly done randomly to make them a lesson for the others. "That made me lose faith in the good intentions of the officers," she said, adding that IV "rules" seemed to have changed this year, and authorities are more active in their patrols.

Third-year UCSB student Shawnie Gerstenberg thinks giving out an obscene amount of tickets is not the best way to curb alcohol abuse in IV. Although she generally respects police, she fears them more.

"When I've encountered policemen sober, they are not intimidating in the least," she said. However, she thinks that random ticketing


"can cause financial harm, and [the police] should be less willing to burden the students financially." Gerstenberg also admits to fearing police while she walks home from parties.

The only way to avoid such worries seems to be asking for escorts home. CSO officer Angel Meza explained that students who "call for a CSO to come won't get in trouble, the same as if you call an ambulance... If someone is being responsible enough to call to get an escort so they could get home safely, most of the time they won't [be ticketed]." CSO officers cannot take someone home who is too intoxicated to walk, however, so in those cases, the police have to get involved. CSOs are usually employed to walk with people who don't feel safe from criminal activity in IV; just the same, CSO officers, who get more respect than police, still take lumps, said Meza. Some students "still try to heckle you. Even if you're trying to help, if you have a uniform on they try to get a reaction out of you."

Gowing said that the police force and campus organizations, like those under Associated Students, want to change the culture.

"We're trying to get the students and the people who live here more involved, and get them to hold their friends and everyone else accountable for what goes on," he said. "These people aren't coming here because the sheriff's department invited them; they're coming here because they have friends, or they're just showing up because they know of these big parties."

In the end, it seems unlikely that student culture will change, even with tough policing and crackdowns. But maybe, as Gowing suggests, the relationship students have with the police can be improved. Ultimately, police are supposed to be there, as the old dictum holds, to protect and serve. But who does random and punitive ticketing protect?

"I love Isla Vista," said one student. "And I realize how dangerous of a place it can be and has been. I just wish the police in IV would focus more on keeping students safe, not writing pointless tickets." 

the **OTHER SIDE** of **INTERNATIONAL**

words // Hannah Nelson

illustrations // Cindy Li

design // Ateken Abla



Tiny orbs of light float through the streets of Lyon during the Fête des Lumières; a river runs under the Ponte Santa Trinita, placidly stunning in the 4 p.m. light. Children play in the dirt streets of Dakar as wild giraffes roam the savannah; lush foliage frames waterfalls in Bangkok as lilac satin dance costumes turn girls into dolls.

Facebook and Instagram pictures depicting scenes like these make many of us, myself included, envy the students who post them, those who have packed up their bags and flown off to another country for six months or so. But while I may not be studying abroad this year, two of my roommates are.

Julie Parke, an adorable Irish girl, plays field hockey and loves pasta. She's from Northern Ireland, but she attends the University of Glasgow in Scotland, where she studies geography.

Amelie Litwin, my other roommate, is a red-haired German girl with an impressive collection of makeup, a tiny waist, and an affinity for dancing. She attends the Free University of Berlin, where she studies film and journalism.

Together, they are two girls from two countries who have brought a new look at the world to me. This is what they have to share.



It's a flat, not an apartment.

Julie and Amelie have me saying “flat” in place of “apartment.” I think “flat” sounds mature, which is lucky, since I now have to make a conscious effort to say “apartment” if I want to preempt my friends from commenting on my Europeanized vocabulary.

Some other gems of British English: “cooler” for air conditioning, “jumper” for sweater, “petrol” for gas, “saucepan” for cooking pot, “sweets” for candy, “tills” for checkout, “trolley” for shopping cart, and “trunks” for boots.

Time is on your side.

Time isn't just different halfway around the world—it's also told differently. If you ever have a very important date in, say, London, keep in mind that “half three” means 3:30, not 2:30.

A quality education doesn't have to cost \$30,000 a year.

Germany, renowned for its esteemed university system, offers education for free (or almost free, anyway). Private universities can cost around 30,000 euros, but Amelie pays only 200 euros per semester. Julie pays 3000 pounds, although she wouldn't have had to pay anything to attend the University of Glasgow if she were Scottish. It could be worse; if Julie were English, the same education would cost her 9000 pounds.

Bio majors, you may be interested to learn that going to medical school in many European countries would mean you don't have to pay off student loans until you're 50. One of Amelie's friends is studying to be a doctor and said that while she will attend university for six years, she takes medical classes every year, then does her residency. In this system, there's no need to complete four years of undergrad in addition to four years of medical school.

You have to know what you're doing, though.

Nobody comes in to a university as “undeclared.” GEs don't exist, and there are no community colleges. In both the UK and Germany, students have to choose a major before they go to university, and most complete their major requirements in three years.

It's a bit different in Scotland; students pick three majors to start with, then narrow it down to two their second year and finally to one their third year. They complete a fourth year to make up for time spent taking the extra classes, but because a lot of Scottish students are 17 when they start college, they still graduate at an earlier age than we do in the U.S.

Additionally, the European grading system is opposite ours: a 1.0 is an A+, a 1.3 an A, a 1.7 an A-, and so on. One of the strangest aspects of the European school system? In Germany, students clap at the end of each lecture, or knock on their desks!

It's okay to relax.

The pace of life is slower in Europe. “You have so much more free time,” Julie said.

There are no midterms, no quizzes, and no assignments to turn in on Gauchospace—only exams and papers due in the spring and sometimes a presentation or small exams around the holidays. This system may sound great (procrastination, woo!), but it also means there's more pressure to do well on those exams and papers.

That's not to say this relaxed pace applies to all students. “It depends on what you study. If you study medicine or law, you don't do anything but study,” Amelie said. “I study journalism, so me and my friends, we don't do a lot. But before exams and writing papers, we work hard, really hard.”

Amelie usually starts a paper two months before it's due and starts studying for finals one month before taking them. She will need to write a 50-page thesis her final semester.

Julie thinks having exams once a year is conducive to the learning process. "You remember things better," she said, but the standards are supposedly higher in Europe. "It's really hard to get an A," Julie said. Multiple choice "is not a thing."

Julie and Amelie agree, however, that adapting to the learning environment at UCSB has been a positive experience. "It's good we learn how to study hard," Amelie said. "Everyone here is really focused."

There's more to life than house parties.

Like clubbing.

Where you are in Europe makes a big difference, of course. In smaller cities like Heidelberg, house parties are more abundant, but in cities like Berlin, clubs open Friday night and remain open until Monday morning. Almost all 20-somethings may be found at a club at some point during the weekend.

For Amelie, going out is an all-night affair. She describes a typical Thursday night, which is when she normally goes out in Berlin: "I would get ready with my girlfriends probably around nine and then start pre-gaming and try to not get tired and fall asleep" before leaving at midnight. On a good night, she gets home at around seven in the morning.

Berghain is the club she most wants to go to. It's the largest club in Berlin and notorious around the world for its darkrooms and X-rated activities. Accordingly, it has what Amelie calls "a really really really hard door."

"What people say is, 'Look as crazy as you can look and then you get in. You can be whoever you want to be in Berghain,'" she said.

Those lucky enough to get past the pierced and tattooed bouncer Sven Marquardt find themselves on a dance floor with ceilings 60 feet up in the air and a sound system touted as the most powerful in the world. Unfortunately for Amelie, it blasts techno, which she describes as "not my music at all."

European chocolate is better than American chocolate.

Julie was bitterly disappointed fall quarter when she discovered that American chocolate has nothing on European chocolate. Cadbury, one of the most popular chocolate brands in the UK, is also produced in the U.S., but according to Julie, "it doesn't taste the same."

Julie has a whole stash of nifty candies, too. Her mom sends her care packages filled with goodies like wine gums, which come in flavors of port, sherry, champagne, burgundy, gin, and claret. It's Jelly Tots, though, that have been Julie's favorite since she was a little girl. These sugar-coated gummies come in traditional flavors—strawberry, orange, lemon, and lime—but purple isn't grape (thank goodness)... it's blackcurrant. **w**





A DAY IN THE LIFE OF THE HEDONIST HIPPIE

words // Apoorva Chiplunkar illustration + design // Brittany Ragan

**YOU'VE MET HER BEFORE, AND IF YOU HAVEN'T,
YOU'VE WANTED TO.**

A lacy bralette hangs loosely on her bony, angular shoulders. A slightly see-through crochet knit dress reveals a body fed on a steady diet of cloves, kale chips, and red wine. Beck calls her “A nightmare hippy girl with her skinny fingers folding your world.” In a generation raised on Hunter S. Thompson’s idea of the American dream, the drugs have never been been easier to get, booze flows like water, and ideas of monogamy seem to be dissolving like incense rings through an open window.

So who the hell is she? This is the girl who’s balancing the delicate line between holding onto the past and selectively flirting with the present. Songs have been written about her. She has a record player. She has the deluxe edition of *Are You Experienced*. She’s slept with you, and with your ex-girlfriend. She’s decked out in Free People flares and ‘70s peasant top. Her lips are pressed to a five dollar almond milk latte that basically contradicts the massive bong rip she just took five minutes ago, but nonetheless is part of her daily ritual. Foregoing the eccentricities, this girl is indeed important—but why? Because, an icon of our time, she is pulling together with her long, stardust fingers the classic and contemporary with every drag of her djarum black.

This is the femme fatale that plays with fire and waltzes the corridors of your deepest desires. She’s the hedonist hippie girl. When she’s not making a living off of breaking hearts, she’s sipping down whiskey sours and browsing gourmet thrift stores for a fur coat, trying to find something “real” in a sea of inauthenticity. So here’s an honest breakdown of her day: the places she goes, the people she does, and the intentional chaos she causes.



MORNING

A disheveled bed and candles oozing wax are bedside staples around her dirty mattress, while empty coffee cups, cigarette butts, and a pile of laundry never to be done sit in a corner of her hallowed world. A vintage nightgown drapes around her loosely as she heats water for her French press, filled with beans she bought at half-price because he liked her tattoo. A shower means organic products that fill the house with sensory plumes of patchouli and tea tree oil, as she meticulously rinses the the musk of the previous evening's fair weather fuck out of her unruly mane. Brushing her hair seems like a tedious affair, so she leaves it in an intentionally knotted nest that falls sweetly on the nape of her neck. She switches on *The Soft Parade* by The Doors, lights a joint, inhales deeply, and heads downtown.

AFTERNOON

An obligatory trip to the French Press means gazing at her favorite androgynous barista who also makes a mean cappuccino. She proceeds to walk in and makes a comment about the '90s shoegaze that's floating through the cafe. She orders and sits at the bar only long enough to know that people are looking at her, then swiftly gets her drink to go and is off to pick up some music at The Warbler. Her long, shapeless dress moves gently in the warmth of the Santa Barbara sunshine; she smiles sparingly at admirers as she has Janis Joplin stuck in her head, enjoying the caffeine rush and the remnants of her morning high.



EVENING

Coming back home only to apply a bit of mascara and a swipe of eyeliner, she is ready to take the Funk Zone by storm. She thoroughly enjoys listening to blues at Red's and absorbs the social panorama surrounding her. The bartender is already making her a drink; it's a simple concoction, a gin and tonic. Weary of overwhelming atmospheres, she's selective in her company and struggles with being alone with her thoughts, so she makes sure her surroundings match her ever fluctuating internal, moral battles. She heads over to Seven Bar & Kitchen and orders another drink. A friend meets her there, clad in a flowy skirt and a crop top. On the prowl, they size up the crowd. Which of these lanky, bearded, man-bunned hipsters is going to be her *homme du jour*? She catches the eye of an obvious fan. He sends a drink her way, and she accepts only on the terms that he'll also dance with her. She's bold when she wants to be; tonight is one of those nights. John Fogerty's howl is dulled by the slurred drunk chatter that fills the bar. She motions to her friend, and they ditch the scene and head for Elsie's. She blends seamlessly into the crowd, a heterogeneous mixture of apathetic stoners and grad students. Like she's been drinking it for years, she nonchalantly mentions to the bartender that she'll have the soju-cranberry, the only "liquor" this bar sells. It's 6 a.m.

LATE EVENING

Allah Las' new album creeps through the speakers, and she's drunk. A sweet, tattooed man with a flannel shirt starts a vacant conversation with her about The Rolling Stones. The hour beckons her to question whether she return to her IV den or go home with him. She decides a fluffy bed and sex would be nice, so she foregoes her gut, and he gets a cab. His apartment is nestled in the hills; large windows and an old dog greet her at the door. The night is long and fun, but she's left before he asks too many questions.

IN THE DECEPTIVE STERILITY OF SANTA BARBARA, BE SURE TO LOOK FOR HER IN THESE GROOVY DIGS

BARS

Elsie's: It's like walking into a bar in the Mission District of San Francisco. Here you'll find every breed from your '90s velvet crop top wearing mistress to a '70s bombshell stretching her legs out on one of their comfy, rugged couches.

Seven Bar & Kitchen: For those seeking the more experienced vintage dame, this bar attracts more of a 30-plus demographic. Come for the drinks, and stay for the eye candy.

Muddy Waters: A hot spot for the hippie girl in training, be sure to catch her trying to use her charm to finagle a beer out of the cashier and watch as she entrances the crowd with her undulating hips.

Red's: The house blues band is a complement to her existential literary tastes. She'll be in an oversized sweater and no pants, smoking a spliff on the patio.

The Imperial: It's a well-kept secret, so much so that we can't even tell you about it.

COFFEE SHOPS

Coffee Cat: Immersed in her newest artistic endeavour, she'll want to be left alone until that poem is finished.

The French Press: When you're done being emotionally overwhelmed by their craft coffee selection, this gathering center for some of the hottest flower children and hipster men will lead to getting no work done. Swing by for a cup and let your imagination run wild.

GRUB

Savoy Cafe & Deli: A kombucha in one hand and bowl of soup in the other, she'll be flipping through the latest Rolling Stone while periodically looking up, hoping to catch an eye.

MUSIC

Warbler Records & Goods: Flipping through Kurt's extensive collection of '60s psychedelia, she won't want to be disturbed while she's browsing through vinyl for her Crosley and buying pine scented incense cones. 

SO THERE IT IS. NEXT TIME YOU'RE SEEKING THAT SPECIAL GAL, YOU'LL KNOW HOW SHE ROLLS AND WHERE SHE GOES. BE SURE TO POP INTO ONE OF THESE PLACES, AND YOU MAY JUST FIND YOURSELF LOCKING EYES WITH YOUR VERY OWN PENNY LANE.

TIME TO SHINE

words + photography + design // Spencer Baker
illustration // Deanna Kim

Chances are you've used something today that uses light-emitting diodes. Maybe you're using it now. Smartphones, computers, and many of our light sources require white LED light. This extremely efficient energy source converts more than 50 percent of electricity into light, compared to the mere 4 percent conversion rate for incandescent bulbs. Three scientists, including UCSB Materials professor Shuji Nakamura, were awarded the 2014 Nobel Prize in Physics for the invention of the blue LED—the most difficult LED to invent, and the most necessary in the advancement of white LED light. This high-efficiency light source was first demonstrated by Nakamura in 1994, and has since aided in the advancement of energy efficiency and sustainability.

UCSB has many sustainability-related initiatives that have resulted in impressive honors this year, ranking us as the nation's No. 3 green school. UCSB has taken a green initiative through sustainable irrigation, support of local farms, solar panels, recycling, campus bikeways, and—you guessed it—the inclusion of high-efficiency LED light bulbs.

This glowing purple greenhouse shows the stunning junction of science and nature. Utilizing striking LED grow lights made possible by Nakamura's invention of the blue LED, this on-campus sight is one of many reminders that UCSB cares not just for its students, but for its environment as well.



UCSB Materials professor Shuji Nakamura was awarded the 2014 Nobel Prize in Physics for the invention of efficient blue light-emitting diodes, which allow for bright, energy-saving light sources.



UCSB was named the nation's No. 3 green school and the nation's No. 1 green public school in *Online Schools Center*.





DIY GARDEN

words // Devin Reed
photography // Trevor Mauk
design // Julia Marsh

Let's talk about our yards. In IV, there's an unspoken standard—unkempt grass, various weeds, and maybe a few obligatory birds-of-paradise put in by the mysterious figure who owns the property. Maybe you added a personal touch: a snappa table made of plywood or a barbecue you found on Craigslist. You can do better than that! With an hour of work and about 30 bucks, you can make your yard literally come to life. My apartment doesn't even have a yard—just 30 square feet of concrete balcony space. Because of my minimal space and budget, I chose to build a vertical wooden planter.

All you'll need to make your own home garden: a wooden pallet, a sheet of medium-grade sandpaper, a small roll of landscaping fabric, a staple gun, an assortment of plants, and 2 large bags of potting soil.



CONSTRUCTION:

1. Find your pallet

While you can find old pallets on the side of the road, it's better to have one that looks nice and isn't falling apart. If you talk to people at large stores like Staples and Home Depot, they may give or sell you a better-quality one. Make sure it isn't falling apart and hasn't been treated with toxic chemicals, and consider finishing or painting it. The pallet will be the frame for the plants you choose—if you don't like looking at it, what's the point?

2. Smooth it out with sandpaper

Take some medium-grade sandpaper and smooth out the rough edges to remove anything that might give you a splinter. You don't want a lot of jagged edges.

3. Staple the landscaping fabric

Take your roll of landscaping fabric and pull it tight over the back of your pallet. Then, with the staple gun, attach the fabric everywhere you can.

4. Plant your plants

Plan out your arrangement: daisies on the bottom and strawberries on top? Succulents around the edges, gardenias in the middle? It's up to you. Keep in mind your plants will be sticking out of your pallet sideways, so make sure the roots are pointing in whichever direction you chose as down. Start from the bottom and pack the soil tightly.



5. Set up your garden

Lean your pallet up against a wall or fence, or hang it if you want to go all-out. Place it in a sunny or shady area, depending on the needs of your plants. Water the plants as directed, starting from the top of the pallet down.



PLANT CHOICES:

Succulents: *plant year-round, not very thirsty, full or partial sun*

Succulents are fun and diverse. They often look like aliens and are the lowest-maintenance plants you can get. Because they are adept at growing horizontally, small ones are ideal for this project. These can be watered once a week or less. Most are just ornamental, but the pulp of aloe varieties can be eaten or used to treat sunburn.

Flowers: *varying*

Plant flowers based on the amount of sun hitting your garden—do some research and decide which ones you think look the best and would thrive in your garden! A few suggestions are listed here, but there are thousands of types of flowers you can grow.

Sun-loving flowers: petunias, geraniums, nasturtiums.

Shady flowers: fuchsias, sweet peas, morning glory.

Herbs: *plant in the spring, thirsty, full sun*

Growing herbs is a great way to literally spice up college cooking. Most of these need a lot of sun and water, but can be harvested regularly for a snack or seasoning. Plant the ones you like the taste of. Stop buying bottled herbs and pick up potted ones instead from Trader Joe's!

Basil: A staple topping for great salads, pasta, or pizza.

Mint: Very easy to grow from a friend's cutting. However, this will spread and take over your garden, so you may want to plant it separately!

Oregano: A zesty Italian herb, similar to thyme, with tiny pink and white flowers.

Thyme: Similar to oregano, but more favored by the English. Also has little flowers, and smells nice!

Rosemary: Grows extremely well in California, and is a bit sweeter than most herbs. It is a good choice for the top of your wall garden, as it doesn't require a lot of water.

Strawberries: *plant in early summer, moderately thirsty, full sun*

Unlike vine-growing raspberries and blackberries, strawberries grow rather close to the ground and are ideal for a hanging garden. Grab a bag of these pre-sprouted from Home Depot, and watch them bear delicious fruit. Harvest in late summer and again in spring.

IN MY GARDEN:

My garden is filled primarily with practical plants I can harvest and eat: strawberries, herbs (like oregano, basil, mint, and thyme), aloe, and a few flowers to keep it looking pretty. I put drier plants like the aloe on the top and thirstier ones like my herbs near the bottom.

Now that you have some examples and a homemade planter, you can set up your own garden however you'd like! No matter what you choose to plant, have fun showing off your handiwork and reaping the fruits of your labor. Happy planting! 🍷

which **CHEESE** represents your **LOVE LIFE?**

words // Parisa Mirzadegan + Cassandra Miasconiv
illustration // Deanna Kim
design // Ateken Abla

It's springtime here in Isla Vista—the perfect time of year to pack up your picnic basket and have a cheese-y romantic date on the bluffs.

Because we know the cheese aisle at Trader Joe's can be pretty overwhelming for the dairy amateur, we've created an easy way for you to find a (cheese) match made in heaven.



1 How did you spend your Valentine's Day?

- a) Cuddling with bae
- b) Drinking alone and crying
- c) Making sweet love to the lucky men (and women) of the world
- d) I went to a goat farm

2 What are you looking for in a partner?

- a) Romance
- b) Non-existence
- c) Assets
- d) Lactation

3 You've decided to pick up gardening! What do you plant first?

- a) Roses for the boo-thang
- b) A carnivorous plant, because I can appreciate a good man- (or woman-) eater
- c) Hot chilies—spicy, smokin', aphrodisiac. We're talking about me, right?
- d) Grass. For my goat.

4 What is your favorite animal?

- a) Buckets of puppies
- b) All the neighborhood cats
- c) Cougars, if you catch my drift
- d) Goat

5 Pick a drink:

- a) A chocolate milkshake—with two straws, of course
- b) A flask full of my own tears
- c) A full-bodied red wine
- d) Goat milk

6 What Harry Potter character would you show your magic wand to?

- a) Ron aka Won-Won
- b) Voldemort
- c) Hermione. And Sirius. With Dumbledore watching.
- d) Aberforth (he's rumored to be quite the goat charmer)

7 Favorite emoji?

- a) [couple kissing]
- b) [poop]
- c) [eggplant]
- d) [goat]

RESULTS

Mostly A's? Brie - Your love life is embodied by this mushy, romantic cheese.

Mostly B's? Kraft American Singles - Like this "cheese," you're better off on your own—trust us.

Mostly C's? Manchego - You're the sexiest cheese there is, you wild thing.

Mostly D's? Goat cheese - Consider opening up a petting zoo to spice things up a bit.



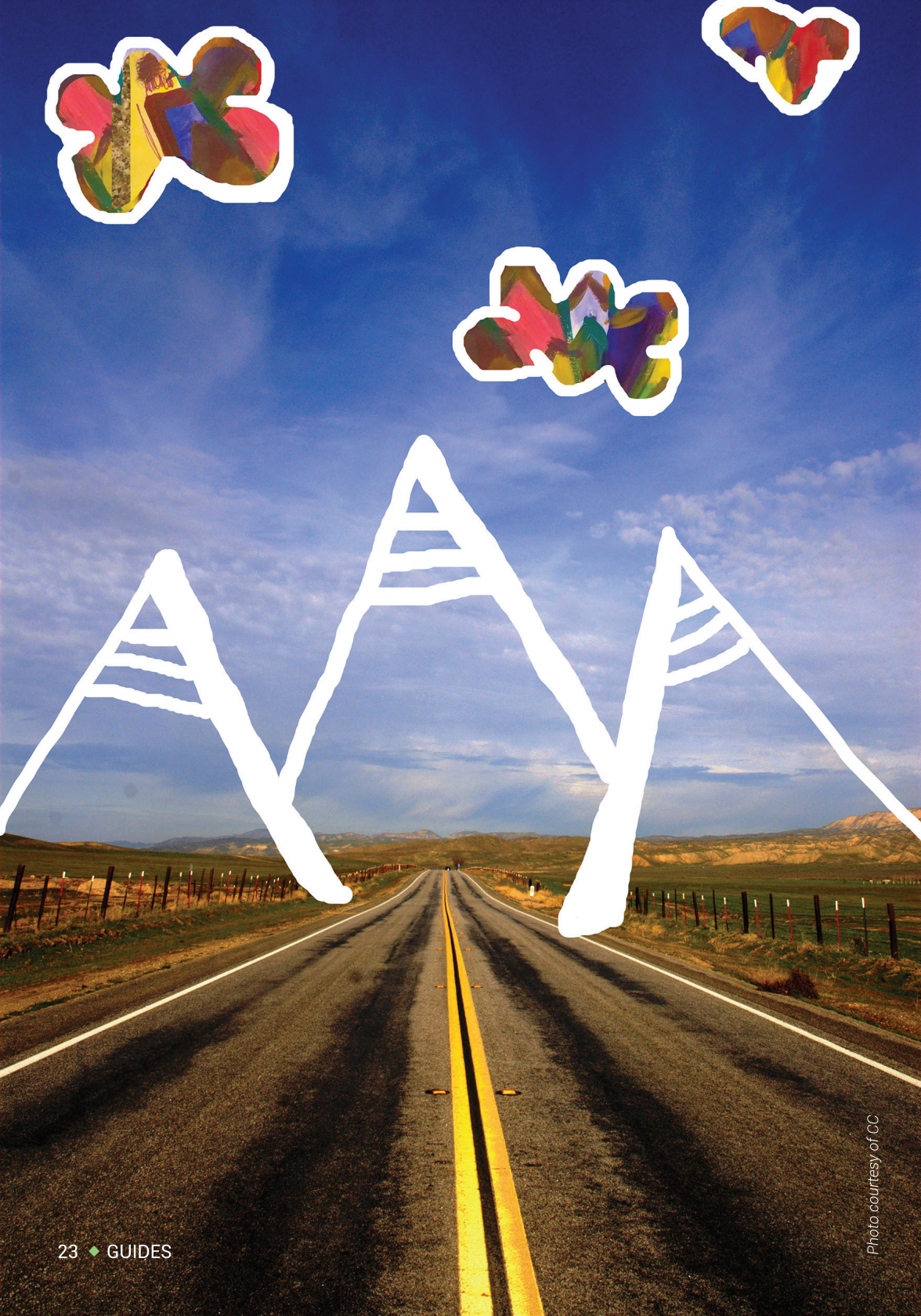


TREES

words // Shaina Goel
design // Spencer Baker
photography // Trevor Mauk

Trees: they convert our trashy carbon into breathable oxygen. Their marvelous capacity to photosynthesize is one of the reasons you are reading this sentence without gasping for air. But they don't just hold the mere responsibility of keeping us alive: they bear fruit to make our tummies smile, grow branches to make our feet tingle with nostalgic excitement, and provide shade for our bodies' much needed rest. Lucky for us, our glorious beachside town holds 25 district parks that are home to marvelous fruit-bearing and climbable trees. According to the Isla Vista Recreation and Parks District, Sueno Orchard alone contains 30 different kinds of trees. In addition to our park-dwelling varieties, some of the trees of Isla Vista reside alone, scattered along numerous nature trails, while others can be found with their families and friends in forests like Ellwood. So whether you aim to satisfy your cravings for fresh fruit, want to read under a shady tree, or desire to relive your adolescent glory days of climbing high up into the branches, here are some of the best trees around to help you out in sunny Isla Vista.





ROAD TRIPPIN'

words // Lara Vaughan design // Trevor Mauk illustration // Shaina Goel

It's no secret that here at WORD we love Isla Vista. We are spoiled with picturesque sunsets overlooking the beach, the best damn quesarrito known to man (thanks, Freeb!rds), and a unique community filled with 20-somethings. But one of the best parts of living in Isla Vista is that we are a short distance from some of the finest places in Southern California. So the next time you have a free day, night, or weekend, take advantage of the 101 and explore!

FOR THE DAY: Santa Barbara

ETA: 15 minutes

How can I not put Santa Barbara on the list when there is so much to do in a town 15 minutes away?

What to Do: Spend a Sunday afternoon wine tasting in Santa Barbara's Funk Zone. This is a perfect one-stop shop for tasting some of the best wines in the region (or, you know, whatever is the most college-budget-friendly drink on the menu). AVA Santa Barbara is a modern and contemporary tasting room, which provides a refreshing change of pace from the usual rustic feel of wineries. This bright and vibrant place has an informative chalk map mural of the local wine region and a friendly staff that could teach you a thing or two about wine. For anyone tagging along who may not be so keen on wine, Corks n' Crowns is a perfect place where both wine and beer lovers can share a drink. This is one of the few tasting rooms that serves wine, bubbly, and craft beer. Sit outside the on the wood patio and people-watch as you soak up

the California sunshine. Oh, and the best part about spending the day at the Funk Zone? It's a 25\$ flat rate Uber back to your Isla Vista pad—because nothing is more appealing than your own bed after a day of drinking.

AVA Santa Barbara: 116 East Yanonali Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Corks n' Crowns: 32 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Where to Eat: Before you hit the Funk Zone, bring a blanket and your favorite food from home to enjoy a picnic at the Santa Barbara County Courthouse. I assure you, this is not your average courthouse. From the beautiful old architecture of the building to the green grass and trees, you will be floored by the beauty. After you finish eating, walk up to the bell tower and take in the view overlooking Santa Barbara. I can think of no better way to spend a Sunday than with a picnic and wine.

*Santa Barbara County Courthouse:
1100 Anacapa Street, Santa Barbara, CA 93101*

FOR THE DAY: Ojai

ETA: 1 Hour

Take this trip on a day when school or work has overwhelmed you. The natural beauty of Ojai is an instant stress reliever, and the flowers and trees are a lovely contrast to the warm, desert-like inland weather.

What to Do: You'll want to embrace Ojai's natural beauty and earthy vibes while you're visiting. This is the perfect day to put your trusty bike to good use, because Ojai is best appreciated outdoors. Ojai is known for its artistic community, and many of the stores show their support by selling goods made by local artists. Summer Camp is one of these shops, and you won't want to miss it. The shop, which was converted from an old gas station into a boutique, is full of local handmade and vintage items. They often host hands-on workshops and pop-up events. Even if you're not looking to buy anything, it's still worth stopping in and walking around to appreciate the décor. For a midday pick-me-up, follow the scent of coffee and caramel just a few doors down to Ojai Coffee Roasting Co.

This little coffee joint located in the middle of town is where the locals go. They roast their own beans and have delicious pastries that you'll have a hard time passing up!

Summer Camp:
1020 West Ojai Avenue, Ojai, CA 93023

Ojai Coffee Roasting Co.:
337 East Ojai Avenue Ojai, California 93023

Where to Eat: Boccali's is a homey Italian restaurant located on the Eastern side of Ojai Valley. Sit outside and enjoy the open Ojai sky, mountain views, and the oak trees surrounding you. For pizza lovers, a slice from Boccali's is worth the drive alone. You can't go wrong with any of their pizzas or their fresh squeezed lemonade. Finish off your meal by giving into your sweet tooth and ordering their to-die-for strawberry shortcake!

Boccali's:
3277 Ojai Santa Paula Road, Ojai, CA 93023

FOR THE NIGHT: Los Angeles

ETA: 2 Hours

What to Do: Bar hop your way through Los Angeles and explore the vibrant night life! La La Land is the place to go for all of you nocturnal humans. Two bars you won't want to miss are Good Times at Davey Wayne's and No Vacancy. Both places will time warp you back to different points in U.S. history. Head to Good Times at Davey Wayne's for the '70s house party experience with shag carpets and vintage beers. The highlight of this bar is watching the roller skate show on top of the airstream camper bar while enjoying a vodka snow cone! And make sure to jump back a few decades with a visit to No Vacancy. This place resembles a speakeasy and is full of secrets and history—it's rumored to have been a brothel at one time. I won't say too much, because the mystery is half the fun of the place, but I will suggest you do not miss the burlesque show out back. Keep an eye out for any celebrities, because it wouldn't be uncommon to run into someone here.

And make sure you don't leave without a photo booth picture!

Good Times at Davey Wayne's: 1611 North El Centro Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90028

No Vacancy: 1727 North Hudson Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90028

Where to Eat: Roscoe's House of Chicken & Waffles is the perfect place indulge in your late night drunchies—just make sure you foot the bill for your designated driver. The later you go, the shorter the wait is to get into this LA hot spot. Look at the menu all you want, but if you know what's good for you, you'll order a #13 - Carol C. Special. When you're eating at 2 a.m., crispy chicken and fluffy waffles are the perfect combination for that in-between-dinner-and-breakfast meal. They only accept cash, so come prepared!

Roscoe's House of Chicken & Waffles:
1514 North Gower Street, Los Angeles, CA 90028

FOR THE WEEKEND: San Diego

ETA: 4 Hours, 30 Minutes

What to Do: Not that we have to travel very far to see the coast, but San Diego is best spent in the sand. Spend your first day relaxing in La Jolla, home to some of the most beautiful beaches in California. Walk over to the La Jolla Cove to check out the hundreds of seals that call La Jolla home. On your second day, roam around Ocean Beach, where you will find the longest pier in southern California. This place, known for its reggae culture, is home to the band Slightly Stoopid. The pier has sublime reggae shows (excuse the bad pun), so look up who is playing over the weekend. Sunset Cliffs is arguably the best place to witness a classic California sunset. Conclude your trip in Mission Beach on the last day. Drop into Belmont Park, an amusement park, to channel your inner child riding the wooden coasters and carnival rides. The highlight of the park is the wave machine at the Wave House that hosts surf trick competitions you could get sucked into for hours.

Where to Eat: Since it's just a hop, skip, and a beat from the Mexican border, San Diego does Mexican food the right way. Hit Café Coyote in Old Town San Diego on your first night. This Mexican restaurant keeps in line with the Old Town ambience. The environment is just as impressive as the fresh tortillas made in entranceway of the restaurant. While you're in Ocean Beach on day two, hit up Bravo's for fish tacos done right. This place has friendly prices for food and drink, so share a pitcher of margaritas and sit by the open-air windows to unwind. On your last day stick around the Wave House for some grub. The view and the setting make for an awesome place to enjoy a final meal in San Diego.

Café Coyote:

2461 San Diego Avenue, San Diego, CA 92110

Bravo's Mexican Bistro & Cantina:

5001 Newport Avenue, San Diego, CA 92107

Wave House:

3125 Ocean Front Walk, San Diego, CA 92109 



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PSYCHIC HUNTING

LEARNING THE ANCIENT ARTS FROM LOCAL SPIRITUAL ADVISORS

words // Cassandra Miasnikov design + illustrations // Deanna Kim

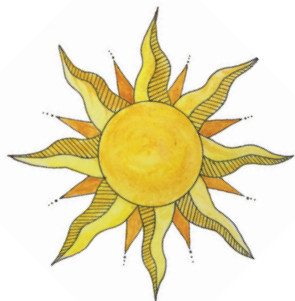
I was born into a family of mystics. My mother can see auras. Both of my grandmothers can foresee your future. Unfortunately, my only psychogenic power is incorrectly predicting when the microwave will go off. The world around us may or may not be full of magic, but there's no denying the existence of a deeply-rooted network of psychics, mystics, and intuitives that make their livelihood by predicting your future, interpreting your present, and healing your

past. Over the past few weeks I have met and studied with nine of these spiritual advisors in the hopes of lifting the veil that separates our world and the mysteries that lay beyond it.

The information that follows is a summation and explanation of my notes from weeks of working with some of the brightest intuitive minds in Santa Barbara. I'll start off by sharing with you the most important lesson I learned: keep your mind and your eyes open.

Hey Baby, What's Your Sign?

The Basics of How to Read Your Astrology

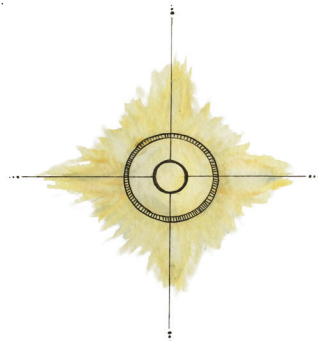


Sun

This is the most obvious part of your personality and the most important part of your astrology chart. Your sun sign, also known as your star sign, is the horoscope sign that best represents your conscious self. This is identified by the day and month that you were born.

Ascendant

Also known as the rising sign, this is the second most important sign in your chart. Your ascendant represents your aspirations, hopes, and dreams. It is also reflected in your outward appearance and how you present yourself to the world. This sign is identified by the time and place of your birth.



Moon

The third most important aspect of your chart, the moon represents the primal, subconscious aspects of the self. Your moon sign shows how and why you are likely to react in emotional situations. This sign is identified by the day, time, and place of your birth.

What Are Your True Colors?

The Basics of Auras

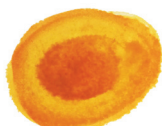
Auras are thought of by many as the distinctive atmospheres of energy that surround a person, which can be seen as one or more colors of light that emanate from a person. Auras consist of seven different layers and relate to a person's emotions, thoughts, behaviors, and health.

What Does Your Aura Mean?



Red

a sign of power, confidence, and sometimes energy



Orange

excitement, creativity, intelligence



Yellow

optimism, hope, playfulness



Green

harmony and growth; often signals a deep connection to nature



Blue

caring, loving, sensitive



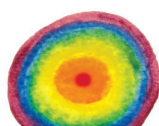
Purple

wise, spiritual, intuitive



Pink

compassionate and sensitive, this color may invite romance



Rainbow

a spiritual healer or one who is living their first life on Earth



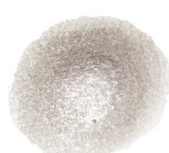
White

a clean slate; angels may be nearby, or a child may come to you soon



Black

captures and consumes light; prone to holding grudges from the past



Silver

awakening of the spiritual mind



Gold

divine guidance and protection, good-hearted

Crystal Healing

The Basics of Crystals

An ancient healing practice that incorporates the use of stones and crystals to cure ailments and protect people against harm.

Common Healing Crystals and Their Purposes



Amethyst

eases tension by relaxing the body and mind



Amazonite

increases wisdom and promotes self-discovery



Aventurine

brings luck, prosperity, and purpose



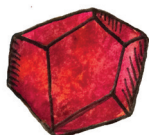
Black Agate

provides protection; strengthens courage and confidence



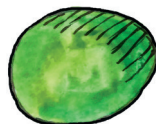
Fluorite

heightens insight and promotes spiritual development



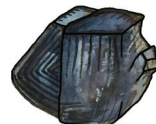
Garnet

inspires and cleanses the mind to abolish creative blocks



Green Jade

brings luck, balance, and protection



Hematite

promotes balance between the body and mind



Rose Quartz

induces love and passion by opening up the heart



Snow Quartz

increases focus and control by balancing emotions



Tiger Eye

heightens willpower; brings dreams to fruition



Zircon

helps you love yourself and others; heightens spiritual aspects

Chakra Healing

The Basics of Chakra

Chakras are our body's energy centers. Find your balance by learning about the seven chakras and identifying which scents and colors are best suited to your needs.

Which Chakra Needs Balancing?

Ask yourself the questions below to identify which chakras you should balance based on your desires. Once you learn which of your chakras need to be taken care of, you can do so by wearing the colors or scents that relate to your chakra.



Chakra 1

Do you feel exhausted or insecure?

location: base of the spine

color: red

scent: patchouli

related to: basic needs



Chakra 2

Do you feel out of touch with your body or emotions?

location: below the navel

color: orange

scent: sandalwood

related to: energy, sensuality



Chakra 3

Do you feel nervous or impatient?

location: abdomen

color: yellow

scent: lemon

related to: confidence, motivation



Chakra 7

Do you feel a loss of self or spirituality?

location: crown of the head

color: violet

scent: jasmine

related to: wisdom, strength



Chakra 6

Do you feel a great deal of stress?

location: between the eyebrows

color: indigo

scent: lavender

related to: intuition, mental clarity



Chakra 5

Do you feel critical of yourself or others?

location: throat

color: light blue

scent: ylang ylang

related to: self-expression, communication



Chakra 4

Do you feel disconnected from others or depressed?

location: heart

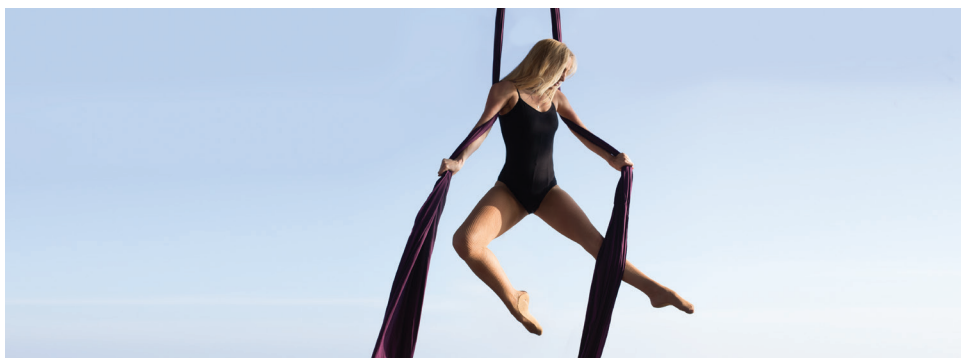
color: green

scent: rose

related to: love, compassion

EXPLORING FLOW ARTS WITH KATELYN CARANO

words // Dasha Sadovnikova
design // Jacqueline Puga
photography // Morey Spellman



Hanging out with Katelyn Carano

There you are, lounging on a rug and some cushions beneath a massive oasis of a shade structure, beyond which the sun radiates a merciless 90 degree heat. Blissfully surrounded by music, art, and other magical forms of human expression, you turn your lazily bobbing head toward the dance floor, from the direction of which waves of deep house entrancingly pound and roll.

A petite young woman approaching a long, split piece of red fabric hanging from the roof of the structure to the ground catches your eye. Your decision to watch her proves rewarding; after limberly shimmying up some fifteen feet of silk, supported only by her body, the woman begins to dance.

She moves with calculated grace, now forming, swan-like, an exaggerated arch with her head at her toes, entwining her feet with the silks and extending her legs into an over-split, and plummeting downward, stopping herself in cannonball position inches from the ground. As you applaud her choreographic fluidity and acrobatic strength, you wonder: who is this woman, and is she for real?

This woman, in fact, is Katelyn Carano, and she is performing a type of movement art called aerial silks. She is quite real. You can find her doing her awe-inspiring thing at festivals and other venues all over the country, from Santa Barbara's Lucidity Festival to Electric Forest in Michigan.

Aside from her more recent involvement in aerial art, this bendy wonder-woman has many facets: she is also a flow artist, a dancer, a hoop dance teacher (otherwise

known as a "hoop mamma"), a third-year UCSB psychology major, and a lover of Isla Vista sunsets just like the rest of us.

I sat down with Katelyn on the balcony of the Faux-Op, the home that she shares with 23 other creative folks on Abrego, and as the sun splashed its brilliant colors of farewell onto a grateful sky, she told me her story.

Katelyn's unconventional life passions were kindled at the distant rave scene of San Diego, her home city. Always drawn to the slightly weirder side of party culture, Katelyn first encountered hoop dance at an EDM event she attended when she was 18. Watching the hoop dancers, she told herself, "I can do that," and did. Two months of whacking herself in the face with a cheap plastic hula hoop led her to joining a hoop dance class, which is where her flow started gaining momentum.

"Hoop dance," Katelyn explains, "isn't hard to do—you've just got to do it." She believes that this is best done in an educational and communal setting, surrounded by other hoop enthusiasts to learn from and collaborate with.

Influenced by her hoop mamma, Valentina (aka Unity), Katelyn soon harnessed her theater background and joined a performance troupe, at the same time exploring the incorporation of hoop into other dance forms—namely, burlesque, belly, and go-go. By the time she arrived at UCSB, the young go-getter had an impressive amount of performance experience under her utility belt (a fanny-pack-like accessory commonly sported at festivals with a number of small, handy pockets—look it up).

So, when she learned that the Leisure Review hoop dance classes had been discontinued years ago, Katelyn did not hesitate to create an artistic platform for herself and others by revitalizing the study of hoop dance at UCSB, a process that involved politely harassing the folks at the Recreation Center, attending an interview, and, upon scoring the gig, shamelessly promoting it.

From an entrepreneurial perspective, Katelyn supposes that she did well to have founded the hoop dance series when she did, in 2012, a time when hula hoops got little mainstream recognition outside of elementary school P.E. classes. If she had attempted it any later, she speculates, someone else would have beaten her to it. Thus, thanks to her trail-blazing attitude, as well as to the advice of her San Diego hoop mamma, Katelyn has been successfully mediating two levels of weekly hoop dance classes at UCSB since the first quarter of her freshman year, the beginner class attracting maximum enrollment each quarter.

Determined to embellish her environment and undeterred by the temporal limits of residing in a college town, Katelyn has also fostered a community of hoop dancers in IV, organizing performances composed of herself and her students at local events such as Chilla Vista, Faerie Fest, and Serenity Gathering.

Aside from teaching, Katelyn has found a creative venue through the intimate flow and aerial art community of Santa Barbara and Ventura. The Fishbon Pescadrome, an artist loft and collective in downtown SB founded and frequented by Burners (Burning Man attendees), enables her to develop her aerial skills six hours a week. It also provides a weekly dose of flow through Flow Cell, a beginner-friendly playground for adults that takes place every Thursday night.

Due in part to her involvement with Fishbon and in part to the creative influence of her cooperative-style home, Katelyn has lately withdrawn from the grueling work of constantly securing performances for herself. She describes the pursuit of these mostly L.A.-based gigs as a "rat race that has


caused [her] a lot of anxiety," a competition that negates the playfulness of participating in the game.

Mentally exhausted from the continual labor of staying relevant in the EDM performance scene, Katelyn has since focused her energy inward. An adamant advocate of mind-body attunement, Katelyn admits that her aesthetic and athletic practice has saturated every aspect of her life. She refuses to miss a day of training, habitually writes in a journal to attain clarity, and—this may shock you, resident of IV—has nearly eliminated alcohol from her diet.

Her routine isn't all work, however; after doing a fair amount of digging, Katelyn has found that Isla Vista offers myriad opportunities for non-traditional celebratory outlets and artistic self-expression. Her own home, for example, frequently serves as a gathering space for like-minded lovers of fun and creativity. Its weekly Monday night open mic, famously known as Bean Night, is now preceded once a month by what has come to be known as a "Flow-op At the Faux-op."

She finds inspiration at UCSB, too: Katelyn credits Professor Christina McCarthy's modern dance classes and UCSB's Health and Wellness organization with having a profound positive impact on her physical and mental health.

As for her future plans, they don't extend much further than graduating a year early this spring and embarking on a festival circuit this summer, which will culminate during Labor Day weekend in Black Rock City, Nevada, where she will perform with the Santa Barbara/Ventura Conclave during the burning of the Man.

The rest of Katelyn's goals are more abstract, though no less palpable for being so. Ultimately, she strives to convey meaningful messages and deconstruct her ego through her performance art, to bask in the conscious exchange of energy with everyone and everything that she interacts with, to travel, and to prolong her stay in IV indefinitely so that she can never stop feeling "overwhelmed," as she says she tends to get, by our town's unbeatable sunsets. 



CYCLE STYLE

words + photography + design // Trevor Mauk

If dog is man's best friend, then a bike is an Isla Vista's. Here at WORD, we don't think it's too crazy to admit that we have developed bonds with our bikes over the years. They've stuck with us on the way to our very first class, between our friends' apartments, and even past the limits of Isla Vista—all without asking for a drop of gasoline. With the help of a U-lock, some of us have even been lucky enough to keep our first bike around for the long haul. Whether you use your bike to fly past those slow-pokes on the bike path or prefer cruisin' and taking your time, we're willing to bet your bike reflects an element of your personality.







Bridget Kyermateng loves the bright colors on her fixed gear road bike.





Jennifer Benz bought her blue Schwinn beach cruiser off Craigslist her first year at UCSB.



THE LIFE + TIMES OF ENDA DUFFY

A casual conversation with UCSB's favorite English professor.

words // Nadine Bedwan

design // Jacqueline Puga

photography // Benjamin Hurst

The entrance to Enda Duffy's office stands out on the second floor of South Hall. In a line of white bulletin boards, his is infused with colorful flyers advertising the talks and seminars he routinely encourages his students to attend. There is also a cover spread of his own book, *The Speed Handbook: Velocity, Pleasure, Modernism*—just one of the books he's written, but the one he deems the best. Inside his office, the walls are lined from floor to ceiling with an extensive collection of books, some for classes and some for pleasure.

When I arrive, he's talking a misguided freshman through the tribulations of choosing a major; in retrospect, it's easy to understand why she thought to discuss the matter with him. Taking one of Duffy's literature courses, you get the feeling he exudes worldly wisdom. His affinity for pulling meaningful messages out of seemingly dry text makes him a likely candidate for students to want to speak to outside of class. This assertion is confirmed by the line of students waiting outside to talk during his office hours, especially given that he isn't teaching any classes this quarter. After conversing with him one-to-one, it seems apparent that his own effect is somewhat lost on him. "I'm the last person who should be giving advice," he chuckles.

Enda Duffy grew up on a farm in a little village in rural Ireland where, he jokes, "I was an extreme goody-goody." He recounts that access to music was scarce, unlike now, and shying away with headphones in one's room was unheard of. Still, people made do.

"People sing an awful lot in Ireland," he recounts. "We used to do that all the time; all family gatherings would have singing... I kind of miss it, actually." In fact, Duffy's sentiments regarding singing could contribute to the recitations he requires in his courses, something that any past or present students of his will likely be familiar with.

"That's kind of the argument for making people recite," he explains. "It's that atmosphere I'd like to have... like, let's not take all this stuff so seriously, but let's rather think of it as a way we can celebrate."

For college, Duffy attended St. Patrick's College of Education in Dublin. He says that his college experience was somewhat similar to that of UCSB students today.

"All the stuff that really influences us... for example pop culture... they weren't really that different," he says. "People are still going to read some romantic books when they're teenagers, but then get a job, get a mortgage, start paying off their car." In stark contrast with UCSB, however, Duffy's school "was extremely mono-racial, mono-cultural, mono-everything. And it was also in general extremely mono-religious. All the meaning of life was provided. It was rarely questioned." He adds that students at the time were "very politically aware, in ways students now are definitely not," and cites the "Troubles" (otherwise known as the Northern Ireland conflict) of the time as a possible explanation.

After attending St. Patrick's College of Education, Duffy got his first taste of



Irish-born English professor Enda Duffy talks art, originality, and haters.

California while attending Cal State Chico for his Masters Degree. He later went on to get an MA in English at Rutgers University in New Jersey, and finally went to Harvard for his PhD. Before teaching at UCSB, he was a professor at Reed College in Portland and at Wesleyan University in Connecticut. Fortunately, he took a liking to California and has been at UCSB ever since.

"It's the best place to be from somewhere else," he says about California. "Nearly everybody [here] is from somewhere else. People are sort of cool with you regardless, in a way that in a lot of parts of the U.S. or even the world they wouldn't be." He continues, "you're not just knocking on the door of somebody else's culture all the time as much as you're invited to contribute." This interesting perspective is one not always considered by natives of the state.

Of UCSB in particular, Duffy states, "the students make a good atmosphere—that's really the best thing about it. There's a lot of kind of... enthusiasm, curiosity, inventiveness...

among the students. Despite all the bad stuff you hear, I think that makes for a generally good kind of atmosphere."

He took some time to tell me about UCSB student involvement in COMMA, the Collaboration on Modernism, Materialism, & Aesthetics. COMMA is one of the English department's specializations, for which he is a faculty advisor—although, he admits, "I don't advertise it nearly as much as I should." Students who join COMMA have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the arts by attending talks and films, all of which have to do with 20th and 21st century literature and culture.

The Arts Library is another one of Duffy's favorite aspects of our school. He cites it as "one of the nicest things at UCSB," largely because it's never too busy, almost as if it were a campus secret, and because they have a great selection.

A point Duffy repeatedly stresses throughout his courses is the importance of indulging oneself in art. He says that art offers

people a way to “cope with the mundane stuff” that often characterizes our everyday lives. Life can undoubtedly be monotonous and plain, and art offers people an escape from that. He uses his preferred author James Joyce to illustrate this point.

“He was saying, ‘Stop deceiving yourself, and rather try to confront the small sort of everyday stuff and see how you’re dealing with it,’” Duffy explains. Unfortunately, in the end, Joyce “doesn’t give you a way out, and in a way that’s the really scary part. There isn’t like one belief system or explanation that can really save us.”

The method of using art as a way to slip away from a bleak reality seems legitimate on one hand, but it can impose its own set of frustrations, given the influx of bubblegum pop material that’s all too plentifully doled out for modern consumerism. Duffy acknowledges this; his proposed remedy is simply that we should make more open judgments.

“People don’t do enough judging, in my opinion. See lots of art—every medium, music, whatever it is—but admit your judgments, and try to find where you’re making that judgment, on what basis,” he says. “Like, ‘Why

am I actually liking this one and not that other one?’... I think people are sort of ashamed of their judgments.” He trails off, but the point still stands. Rather than fearing judgmental words like “hater,” perhaps people could talk about why they make judgments in the first place and, in this way, contribute to society.

Art could also function as a medium for your own creativity, according to Duffy.

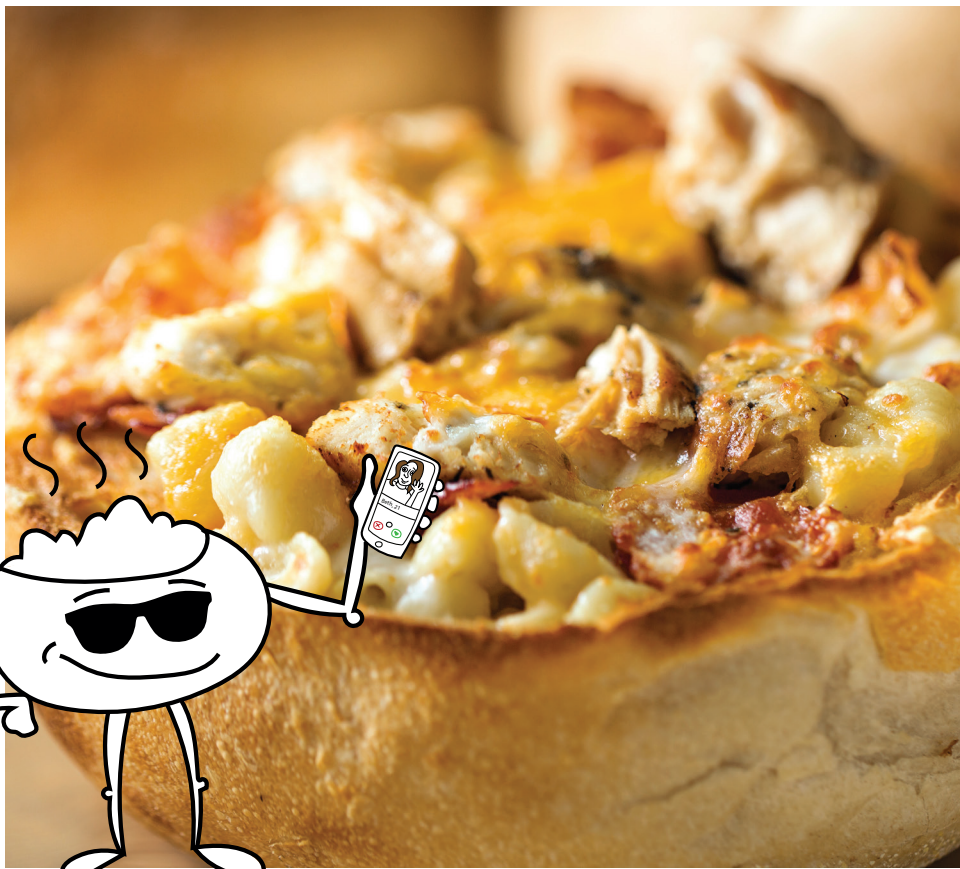
“I think if art makes you make art yourself, there’s something good about that for your sense of self, that by some chance you might come up with some original thing. And after all, half of what we’re after is some sort of originality,” he says. “It’s hard for everyone to be original... we’re all just copying and pasting, basically—except, apparently, at American universities, where nobody plagiarizes,” he teases.

Sitting in a large lecture hall makes it easy to feel disconnected from professors, but this feeling never translates in Duffy’s lectures. This could be because he walks around personally picking on those who aren’t paying attention, but it more likely has to do with how genuinely interested and personally invested Enda Duffy is in what he’s teaching—and it shows. **w**



Shelves of old books and an architectural model fill Duffy’s office with artistic inspiration.

Done



The MacDaddy



less than a mile away Active 27 seconds ago

About MacDaddy

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Find me on FB at facebook.com/Buddha-Bowls

Or just call (805) 961-4555 ;)

Shared Interests (54)



BUDDHA BOWLS

901 Embarcadero Del Mar

SPARK

words // Cindy Li
photography // Morey Spellman

Wind,
kiss me with
your gentlest breath.
Whisper promises of
abundance, remind me I
am born on this day that I peek
out of the moist black

Soil,
envelop my tangled
toes, grains of the soft earth
mothering crawling creatures
wiggling between my feet.

Sun,
paint me so I no longer have a trace
of the pallid winter,
until I sway upon
the dancing earth, illuminate
my laughing face because
though I am the wealthiest,
most promising, most loved at
this moment,
I do not have forever.



SPRING 2015

ISLA VISTA ARTS

Visit our up-to-the-minute calendar for an enticing variety of films, theater, visual arts, and pop-up events! www.ihc.ucsb.edu/ivarts

MULTI-CULTURAL CENTER

Don't graduate without making friends at the MCC. They host an astonishing variety of culturally enriching and educational events on campus, in Isla Vista, and in the Santa Barbara area. www.mcc.sa.ucsb.edu www.ihc.ucsb.edu/ivarts

IMPROVABILITY

Start your weekend with a laugh. Join the audience of UCSB's premier improvisational comedy team and be a part of their fast-paced show. Voted "Best Late Night Entertainment" at UCSB! Fridays at 8pm and 10pm for only \$3 at Embarcadero Hall. Find them on Facebook and Instagram @improvability.

UCSB ART OPENINGS

The Art Department's weekly art openings and shows are perfect for undergrad and graduate students on campus. www.artsite.arts.ucsb.edu/event

UCSB THEATER & DANCE

Just 30 seconds from Isla Vista! Walk through the Pardall Tunnel and your world opens up to cutting-edge theater and dance performances. Check out their exciting season and low-cost tickets. www.theaterdance.ucsb.edu

SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

These performances bring classical drama and wild Commedia d'ell Arte performances to the heart of IV. Shakespeare in the Park provides free, family-friendly productions. facebook.com/IVShakespeareinthepark

ART EXHIBIT

We Remember Them: Acts of Love and Compassion in Isla Vista
The Old Gym UCSB Campus
Dates of Exhibit: May 20-June 20

THE BOX AT IV THEATER

Are you interested in designing an exhibition seen by thousands of people every day? The BOX is a student-curated gallery located in the lobby of IV Theater. The BOX promotes the visual arts within the community of IV. Contact Mary McGuire, mmcguire@umail.ucsb.edu

BIKO INFOSHOP

Embracing a wide variety of styles, this group presents regular concerts in a garage on Sueno Rd. in Isla Vista. The Biko Garage is an open, respectfully run, and cooperatively managed community space inspired by Stephen Biko, an intellectual anti-apartheid leader who shared a vision of a world where people of all races, genders, and backgrounds could learn from and support one another across boundaries. The Biko Garage furthers that vision by providing a community space. www.sbdy.org

A CAPPELLA

UCSB a cappella groups perform year round at various special events, throw concerts each quarter, deliver singing grams, and even do flash mobs from time to time! Naked Voices (co-ed), Brothas From Otha Mothas (all-male), VocalMotion (all-female), InterVals (co-ed), and Ravaani (South Asian/co-ed) can all be found on Facebook for contact information and news about upcoming events!

BE THE PRODUCER

Need advice on producing your own exciting show or performance in the wilds of Isla Vista? Isla Vista Arts can help. Contact Ellen Anderson, eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu

UCSB HEALTH & WELLNESS

In addition to providing resources and support, Health and Wellness hosts field trips and Dog Therapy days. www.wellness.sa.ucsb.edu

AS PROGRAM BOARD

AS Program Board is a student-operated non-profit organization funded by lock-in fees that aims to coordinate fun and educational events for the UC Santa Barbara community. Appointed student board members gain hands-on experience in planning, booking, advertising, and running various events ranging from intimate open mics to 10,000 capacity festivals. You can depend on them for a great movie every Tuesday night in IV Theater.

THE WARM UP

Want to ditch DELTOPIA but aren't ready to visit your parents again? Come to campus for a weekend of concerts, roller skating, photo booths, snacks, Game of Thrones Marathon, prizes, street fair fun, and so much more! Planned for Gauchos by Gauchos. Find the event on Facebook for more info!

GAUCHO CERTIFIED FARMERS MARKET

Eat fresh. Buy loco! An avenue for staff, students, faculty, and the local community to access fresh, locally grown produce and artisan goods. Wednesdays from 11-3 PM, located between North Hall and Campbell Hall. www.facebook.com/gauchocertifiedfarmersmarket

MAGIC LANTERN FILMS

Showing films such as Interstellar, Hunger Games, and more every Friday and Monday. All events, just \$4! www.facebook.com/MagicLanternFilmsIV

LAUGHOLOGY

Live stand up comedy show every Saturday at 8PM in Embaracadero Hall. Past comics include Adam Devine, Chris D'elia, and Tig Notaro. Always free so be there early for a seat!



Have you ever found yourself coming out of the grocery store laden with bags, burdened and barely able to open your car door? Blame it on the bag.

BAN THE BAG

words + photography + design // Julia Marsh

It's a Saturday. You need zucchini. You go grocery shopping. You're checking out, and the cashier asks, "Paper or plastic?" You feel the cold stares of fellow shoppers as you choose one of two evils. Either way you can't win. When you go to bag up your produce, judgment sets in like a heavy fog over your otherwise sunny day. This must stop.

In many cities, the plastic bag has been banned entirely, leading to a general distaste for disposable bags—and for a good reason. Plastic bags are only used for about 25 minutes on average but take over 100 years to disintegrate, and about one million of them are used around the world per minute. The paper bag is similarly scorned; why use paper when you could just *NOT*, am I right? Most shops will charge you 10 cents per single-use bag, and while that dime won't cost you much in the long run, it's avoidable.

Many of us have taken to using tote bags in an effort to maintain some sense of environmental consciousness when shopping, which is certainly a step in the right direction. But what happens when you forget the tote?

I've come to dislike plastic and paper bag usage just about as much as I dislike fedoras (which is a lot, by the way), so when I forget a tote bag, the solution is to stuff vegetables into my waistband and fruits into my shirt pockets. Grocery clerks typically find it to be endearing, but this method is less than practical...Which brings us to our one-step solution:

The Veggie Sweater. With ample pockets for a full shopping trip, this hip new fad will solve all your grocery woes. No bag to carry, and no scornful looks from fellow shoppers.

To demonstrate, we've asked two Isla Vista gentlemen to show you how truly practical this sweater can be. We hit up the Thursday farmers market and loaded up on a whole range of produce, including multi-colored radishes, sweet snap peas, and giant strawberries. We've included the Santa Barbara farmers market schedule, just in case you're interested.

Wear the Veggie Sweater to your local Albertsons, friendly food co-op, or farmers market, and not only will you help preserve the environment; you'll also look absolutely smokin'.

Open year-round, rain or shine!

Find your favorite farmers market at www.sbfarmersmarket.org

Saturday: Downtown, 8:30am-1pm

Sunday: Goleta, 10am-2pm

Tuesday: Downtown, 4pm-7:30pm

Wednesday: UCSB Campus, 11pm-3pm

Thursday: Goleta, 3pm-6:30pm

Friday: Montecito, 8am-11:15am



The Veggie Sweater is a hand-sewn masterpiece, each one uniquely designed with a dozen pockets for vegetables and fruits of any size. Tomatoes and turnips, lemons and leeks alike fit comfortably in individualized produce pouches.

If you have concerns about odd looks from passersby, just remember that you'll never see them again! And if you do, you'll be prepared with an original icebreaker up your sleeve. (Get it? Because you'll have veggies attached to your arms! How cool and hip you are!)





models // Ryan Walker and Alex Rich

KISS ME BABY

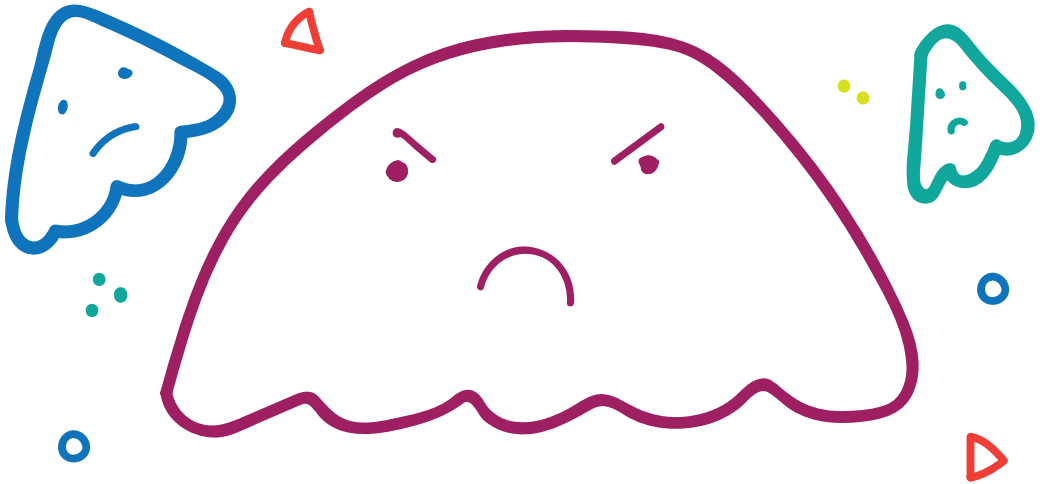
words + art // Michelle Angelillis

design // Julia Marsh

As I stood in People's Park, I could feel the whirl of life around me. The grass glowed with golden light as tiny bugs hummed and jumped from leaf to leaf. Kelty Kauffman and Afton Abell walked in front of me as I photographed them, trying to pinpoint the exact moment of intimacy that transcends the kiss: a head tilt, a slight smile, a hand raising to gently touch the other's cheek. Spring brings with it a rush of passion and renewal. Everything feels alive and fresh, allowing intimacy to flourish. Our walls come down as we turn away from the dampness of winter into the sunlight of spring. Kelty and Afton showed me this transformation in a single breath, as they held each other close.



models // Afton Bell and Keltie Kauffman



ANXIETY

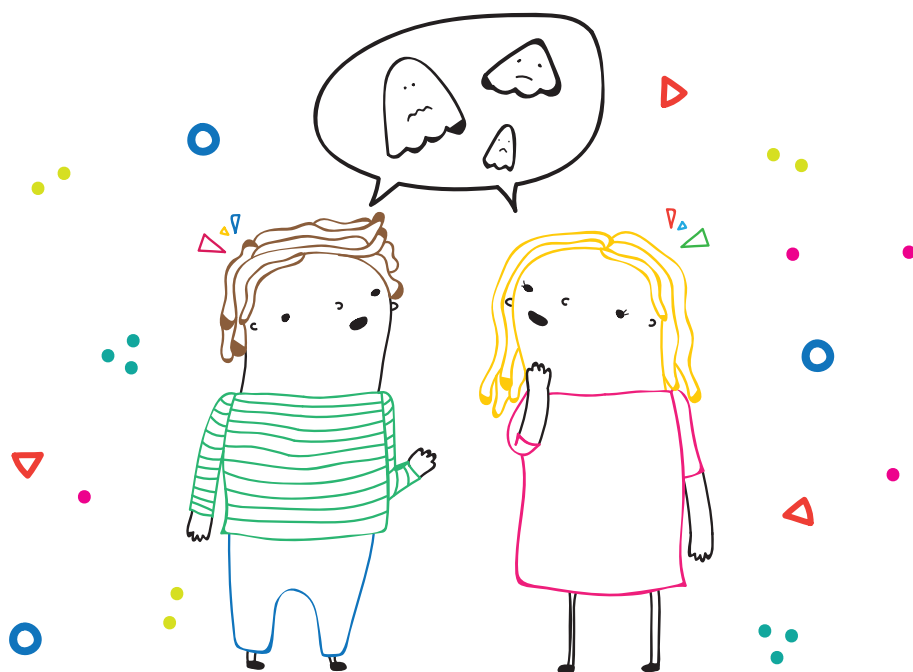
Joe was feeling stress.
His whole life felt like a mess.







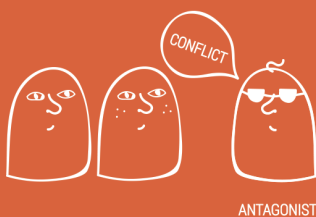
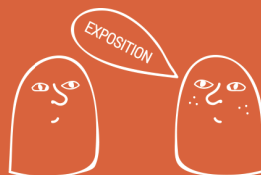
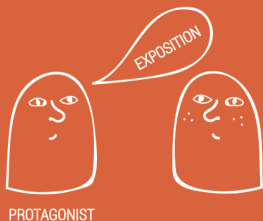
It was a troubling trend,
until he talked to a friend.



And now they worry less.

STORY

words + illustration + design // Brittany Ragan



IV INTERACTIVE

ANSWERS

Down: 1. Dogsnitpark 2. seniors 6. iPhone 7. SandsBeach 8. Freebirds 9. Blenders 10. Snapchat 11. speakers 12. WDeil



Down

1. Famous Isla Vista park named after poop
2. Class of 2015
6. Bite out of an apple, stolen last Friday sometime between 12 a.m. and 3 a.m.
7. Isla Vista/Goleta area visited by runners, bikers, and surfers
8. Home of the Brostada and the best burritos
9. Smoothie hangover cure
10. Social media, seen for a limited time only
11. IV party essential, gets the people going
12. Late night chicken fingers, Ben & Jerry's, and snacks

ANSWERS

Across: 1. dog 3. couchburning 4. sunset 5. beer can 10. shoes 13. keg bottle 14. dancing 15. yikyak 16. bike 17. freshman 18. shot glass



Across

1. Man's best friend
3. Destruction of furniture considered a felony in Isla Vista
4. Isla Vista's favorite Instagram picture
5. Object of interest for the can fairies of IV
10. Thrown over the telephone wire
13. Where most Isla Vistans buy their drank
14. Moving to the music
15. Local media behemoth named after a furry beast
16. Main form of UCSB transportation
17. First-year college babies
18. Small vessel for a quick drink

Εlla
Isla Vista Food Co-op
Produce Clerk
9 month employee
SBCC student

isla vista
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ISLA VISTA GIVES YOU CREDIT

Interdisciplinary Humanities Center courses offered Spring 2015

MAGIC LANTERN FILMS

FILM/MEDIA 119ML, ISLA VISTA FILM EVENTS

Magic Lantern Films teaches the ins and outs of film programming using IV Theater as a lab. Students gain experience in brainstorming, fundraising, budgeting, publicizing, researching, theater management, series-pitching, and curating, culminating in the execution of screenings that come out of students' own pitches.

Contact DJ Palladino at djpalladino@ihc.ucsb.edu

WORD MAGAZINE

INT 185ST, THE CREATION OF THIS PUBLICATION

This issue of *WORD: Isla Vista Arts & Culture Magazine* is brought to you by the student artists and writers in INT 185ST and its partner OSL campus organization. We are always looking for new writers, designers, photographers and artists! We meet Fridays from 3-5pm. All majors welcome.

Contact Ellen Anderson at eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu

IV LIVE!

THEATER 42/142, PR AND IN-HOUSE EVENT MANAGEMENT

Experience promoting and producing weekly Improvability comedy shows along with additional live performances in Isla Vista. Learn backstage and front-of-the house skills. Explore public relations, talent relations, advertising, and production management in this real-world setting. All majors and years welcome.

Contact Rena Heinrich at reinrich@umail.ucsb.edu

SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK

THEATER 194A, GROUP STUDIES IN ACTING & DIRECTING

Study Shakespeare while producing a theatrical performance for the Anisq'Oyo' Park amphitheater. Students play assigned roles, execute specific production duties, attend rehearsals, and finally perform their work during the final weekend of classes.

All majors welcome.

Contact Ellen Anderson at eanderson@ihc.ucsb.edu

SIERRA HOTEL

words // Marcee Davis design // Emily Rogers

Marcee Davis served four years on active duty and seven years as a reservist in the United States Navy. She is a California native, and is currently pursuing her undergraduate degree at UCSB while raising her two young children with partner Mario Moreno, a fellow Navy veteran turned student. Davis was deployed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom during 2004, 2005, and 2007 with Electronic Attack Squadrons 130 and 134.

BROWN BEAR

It is funny to think about the things you carry with you on deployments, to remember the life you left behind. For some, it is a good luck charm or talisman that was given by a loved one. For others, it might be a picture of a happier time, in a happier place, or it may be the remnant of a blanket or t-shirt that faintly transports the sweet smells of home to distant lands and spaces.

The birth of my child changed my life at a young age. I never knew a love so profound as the one I carried for my infant son. Though it tried, the distance between continents and oceans could not alter the affection I felt for my son. The cold frozen ground in Afghanistan was tough and rigid. I wore its camouflage every day. Lying in my hard bed, made of plywood and hand-me-down mattresses, the world seemed so lonely and desolate. I longed for the warmth of my son, who would rest on my chest and touch his soft hand to my cheek.

Instead of a child made of flesh and bone, I would pull a small bear to my heart and draw in the sweet smell of my baby that faintly clung to the fibers of its synthetic hair. A cheap, small, brown bear carried all the love for my son in its stuffing. Where the desert was my home and a shack was my bed, the stuffed bear was my surrogate son.

Many years later, as I look around the room of my two children, I often wonder about the choices I have made as their mother. I wonder if I am doing enough, if I am raising them right. But then, just as I am about to fall down a never-ending slope of doubt, I catch the eye of a small brown bear sitting in the corner, on a high shelf, and I remember that I am here and I am present. And the doubt melts away.

BLUE EYES

Two big blue eyes stared up at me through a shaggy jumble of bright blonde hair. The rest of the world went quiet. The heat from outside rolled in through the automatic doors as they open and shut to let weary travelers pass through. Elbows and arms jutted through autonomous bodies, grabbing for luggage on the carousel. The loud voices that poured from the speakers and the countless digital screens that filled the room with timetables and charts seemed now to soften and mumble.

Just a few days ago, I was in Afghanistan working in the heat and the dirt. The world seemed simple. Without warning I was transported on a plane back home. Although I felt relieved, I was out of place standing in the crowded airport on that hot July day, until I saw those blue eyes.


There was no pomp and circumstance around my return. I didn't come home to a parade in my honor. No one came running to my side to say, "Thank you for your service." To the rest of the world, I was a young traveler on a busy holiday weekend no different from the thousands of others. But to one young child waiting in the bustle of the airport, I was the one who was finally home.

The baby I had left so many months ago was now a walking, talking person. Nothing about him seemed the same, except for that adorable infectious

laugh, that mass of blonde hair, and those piercing blue eyes. I spotted him from far away as he toddled through the baggage claim in pursuit of a fallen toy. For a while, I watched him play from afar. There is so much joy in the gait of a child that has not a care in the world.

When his gaze matched mine, he stood still. Cautiously, as if approaching a deer in the woods, I walked forward.

"The baby I had left so many months ago was now a walking, talking person. Nothing about him seemed the same, except for that adorable infectious laugh, that mass of blonde hair, and those piercing blue eyes."

I didn't want to scare him by my movements. I wasn't sure he knew who I was. But then, his arms reached out for me, and without a word, I picked him up and kissed him on the cheek. We stood there, silent in the terminal, and let the time and the people pass, both looking into each others' blue eyes. 

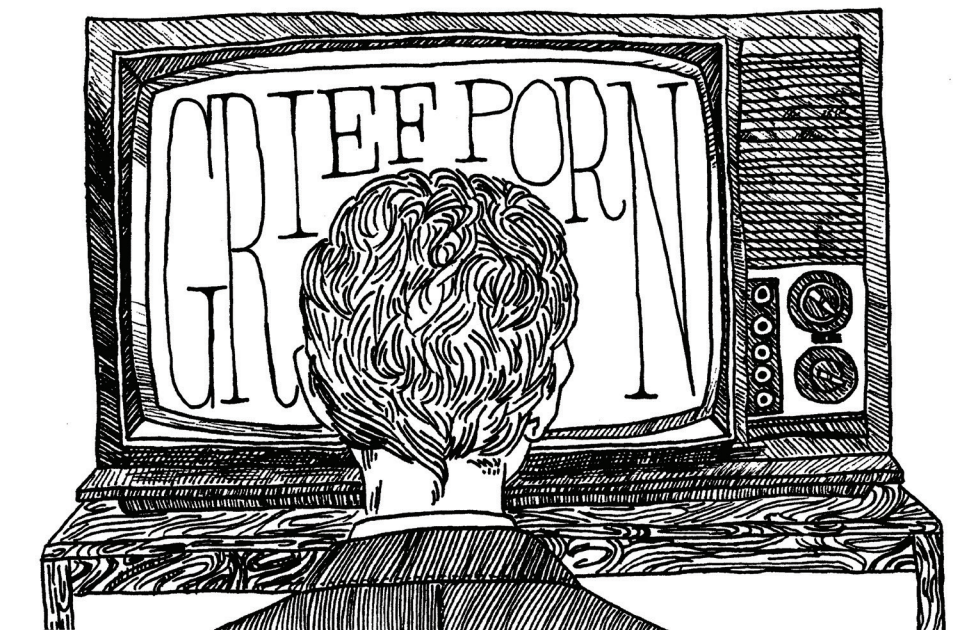
THE ALBINO RACCOON

A Rant by Your Not-So-Friendly Neighbor

words // Matt Mersel

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My worldview changed dramatically last year on May 23, 2014. In the dark days that followed, we all struggled to come to terms with what had occurred. But an enormous obstacle stood in our way: less than a full day after the events had taken place, Isla Vista was inundated with news trucks and reporters desperately seeking details of the massacre in order for their news organization to get a leg up on the competition.

But hey, that's journalism. I work for a newspaper; I know that sometimes you gotta do what you gotta do. What I refused to accept, however, was the behavior of these news organizations and their representatives who invaded our town. Cameras and microphones were shoved callously into the faces of grieving students and community members. The faces and names of the deceased weren't

featured in the headlines; that honor went to the person who perpetrated these actions. Myths and horror stories about the "Virgin Killer" were plastered across the nightly news and social media feeds. It made me sick. None of the news crews wanted to tell the story of a grieving, tightly-knit community helping each other through a tragedy. They wanted tears. Anger. Death. Because that's what gets ratings. That's when a friend introduced me to a handy new term: "grief porn."

We call it grief "porn" because grief is something deeply rooted in human biology, and it produces such a carnal and intense reaction that it may as well be sexual. Grief porn is what we see daily on the news. I implore you to turn on the local news tonight. If the lead story isn't about a rape, kidnapping, murder, or otherwise tragic event, track me down and

I'll give you a dollar. Grief porn is why CNN devotes 24-hour coverage every time there's a plane accident, even when there are no new details, and meanwhile militant groups in other countries are slaughtering innocents by the thousands. And if it plays on human emotion like that, you can bet every news outlet is going to be foaming at the mouth for the next grand massacre or kidnapping. Because that's what gets ratings. And we accept that, barely even questioning it. I hadn't questioned it until it came to my doorstep. And you know what? That's really fucked up.

I'm not saying that reporting on tragedy is a bad thing, because it's not. Horrific events show the human race—us—what our problems are, and in what areas we need to improve in order to make the world a better place. However, blatantly pushing grief and sadness onto the public like pornography isn't just morally detestable, it's detrimental to society as a whole. When you turn on the news, you aren't shown a world worth helping or saving anymore. You see a lot of really terrible things. You hear people talk about how terrible they were. You sit back as reporters move on to the next tragedy. You end up feeling shitty about yourself and your own mortality.

Grief is deeply rooted in the human experience because we dread death. However, torturing the public with horror stories and fear mongering only serves to distance us from each other in irreparable ways. We fear religious people because news organizations are happy to show us extremists beheading prisoners, but we balk at the thought of explaining how 99 percent of theists are not brazen, fanatical murderers. We fear our neighbors because news outlets love to play up the fact that "no one knew that kindly old Mr. Johnson from next door was a schizophrenic pill addict and pedophile," but we wouldn't dare try and tackle the larger institutional issues that may have contributed to these behaviors—the lone exception being gun control, which frequently gets brought into play because, hey, it deals with death!

You don't tune into nightly news anymore to see the good in the world and how we can help fix the bad. You tune in because networks

are making careers out of saying, "Watch our news to figure out how to not die!"

I've had a lot of time to think about this one. I like to think of myself as a generally happy person, someone who tries to see the good in life more than I see the bad. But the world is a scary place, and there are a lot of bad people who do a lot of bad things for some very bad reasons. However, that doesn't mean that there aren't just as many good people trying to help each other for no reason at all. At the end of the day, whether you believe the world is good or bad is entirely subjective. Perspectives change all the time, shaped and sculpted by the people we meet, experiences we share, and the things we see.

News organizations have a crucial responsibility in our society: they are instrumental in shaping the way each of us looks at the world. If major networks were your only source of news, you'd probably think the world were a shitty place. But it's not—at least not entirely. Grief porn makes us fear our planet, our fellow humans, and even ourselves. If we want the world to be a better place, we need to stop taking these narratives at face value and start to break out of this emotional manipulation. The lens you look through makes all the difference. [w](#)



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