

ACTIVITY DURING

CREATIVITY DURING A PANDEMIC

SPRING 2020
ISSUE 1

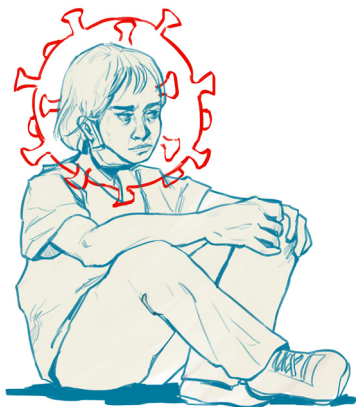
SAS

A PANDEMIC



CREATIVITY DURING A PANDEMIC.

BY STUDENT ART SPACES



Student Art Spaces is a youth-led organization amplifying student voices in art through gallery exhibitions and art events. Want to be part of our community?

@studentartspaces on IG
www.studentartspaces.org
studentartspaces@gmail.com



FOREWORD

When my creative partner and I co-founded Student Art Spaces a year ago, we had a simple vision: to display youth art and build a community. The Coronavirus pandemic, while it limited us to remote online work, has also opened our eyes to the myriad of other ways we could support the community and organize using the digital tools that we are familiar with.

Something that I've found is that I learn something from every project we do. While that includes concrete skills like formatting and design standards for magazines, it also includes learning about new perspectives.

As an Asian-American artist, I was pleasantly surprised to see my own feelings-- shock, playfulness, bitterness, and a strange sense of peace-- echoed in the works we received. In our call for art, we asked for creators to share their reaction to the political struggle surrounding the pandemic, from a global to a local level. We asked for personal reactions as well-- journal entries, reflections, poetry, crafts that they have taken up to pass the suddenly abundant time. I hope that the process of artmaking can help our community heal and find connection even through social isolation.

I hope that you guys find the writings and art here as thought-provoking, beautiful, and representative as I did. Thank you to everyone who participated in the zine, especially the graphic design volunteers and the busy people who were able to lend me a hand with the administrative work! If you'd like to work with us in the future, feel free to message me or send me an email.

Thank you!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alice Mao". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of "Alice" and "Mao" being capitalized and prominent.

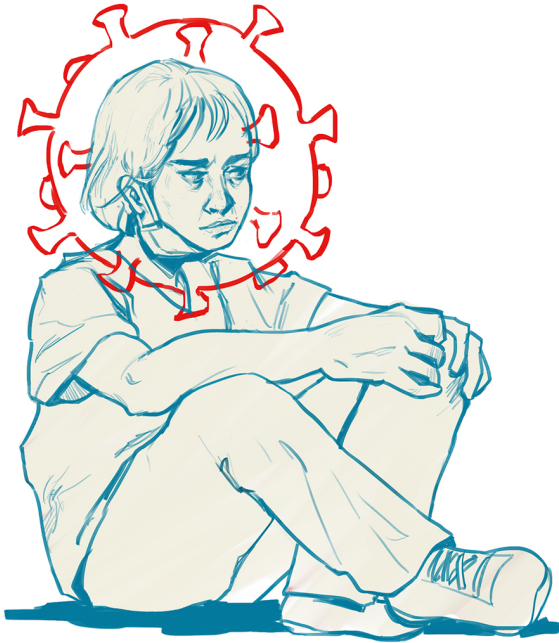
Alice Mao

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Front Lines

Bonnie Wang, 17
Seattle, WA

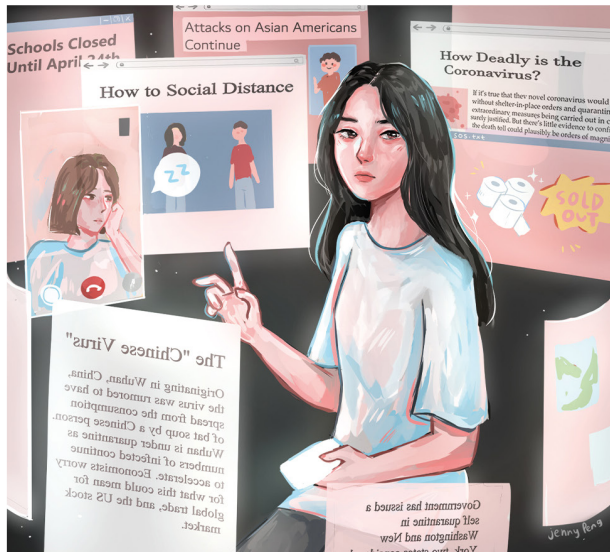
 @eyesfighter

Bingrén

Natalie Wei, 16
Mountain View, CA



teenage bubble teenage bubble teenage bubble



Jenny Peng, 16
Sammamish, WA
 [@jenn_scale](https://www.instagram.com/jenn_scale)

quick, put your mask on
quick, put your mask on
quick, put your mask on



Emily Chen, 15

Bellevue, WA

 [@ciatoru](https://www.instagram.com/ciatoru)

An Obituary for the Model Minority Myth: You Were Never Loved

Written by Dominica Tang

Edited by Denise Tenio, Chloe Houdé, and Megan Sue-Chue-Lam

The model minority myth describes Asians living in North America as obedient, industrious, and law-abiding, good contributors to the economy and dominant culture. In the age of COVID-19, the dominant society quickly abandoned the hollow epithet and has re-cast us as diseased bodies that undermine the order and well-being of the nation.

For Chinese-Canadians, the model minority myth has upheld a thin illusion of inclusion and suspended any disbelief in its validity. Yet, even after the implementation of the 1988 Multiculturalism Act, multiculturalism in Canada has only existed at the superficial level. Mainstream society concocted the model minority depiction of Asian immigrants to ensure the continued isolation and oppression of Indigenous and Black people in Canada. It pits marginalized groups against each other. Additionally, the myth strongly purports that oppression of Black and Indigenous people is their own fault rather

than that of the capitalist-colonial state. To the state, Chinese-Canadians are just that: models. Models to be used to further the hegemonic agenda of oppression and project a false identity of inclusive national multiculturalism. The Canadian government uses us as statistics and visual aids to support a rhetoric of inclusion, but it never translates into respect for our community. We are still outsiders. This ongoing sentiment of xenophobia is best illustrated in Western depictions of our food.

The media talks about our food in two ways. The first way is a lackadaisical gesture towards a multicultural national identity,

病毒 “Virus”
Angela Bi, 17
Los Altos Hills, CA
@unmeimei

promoting dishes deemed palatable to mainstream society such as sweet and sour pork, xiao long bao, chow mein, and fried rice. The second talks about how disgusting or toxic our food is. Century egg, MSG, and chicken feet are a few common examples. The latest dish under this spotlight is bat soup, which, first and foremost, is not a dish that is commonly eaten by Chinese folks. However, commentary on such large platforms on bat soup spills over into commentary about the larger perception of Chinese people as disgusting carriers of disease. Food is a common identity marker across many cultures. How you present and talk about another culture's food is emblematic of your perceived notions of that community. There is a long history of othering Chinese folks, alongside other Asians, that has been amplified and made more explicit during the pandemic.

Multiculturalism is not an even experience, as we have seen. The colonial state



placed us higher up on the *vertical mosaic*, a term coined by John Porter to expose the hierarchy embedded in Canadian multiculturalism, to perpetuate the oppression of Black and Indigenous peoples. We know the recent rise in violence against us is a daily, state-sanctioned lived experience for them. To be honest, I doubt the model minority ideology can ever truly be dead while systemic oppression against Black and Indigenous peoples continues. Some government officials and media outlets have denounced verbal and physical attacks on Chinese, but the Canadian government continues to invade Indigenous homelands. This is why we reject the model minority myth. It is imperative that we use our privilege to support and make space for these groups against the efforts of a racist colonial government. ■



Lonely
yo!ra, 15
Aachen, Germany
[@yo.ra02](#)

STAY HOME BECAUSE
THEY CAN'T.



Stay Home
Taylor Wang, 17
Seattle, WA
[@yingshiart](https://twitter.com/yingshiart)

Shopping List

Melanie Perez, 16

Peekskill, NY

 @space.cadet26

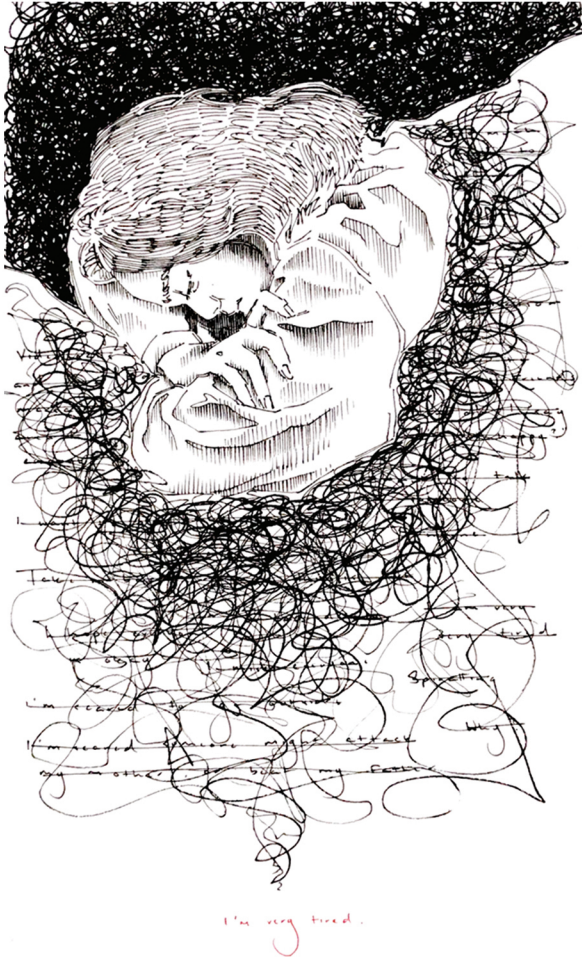




In My Room

Natalia Sandico, 19
Shoreline, WA

 [@marisolbahay](https://www.instagram.com/marisolbahay)



*Please, Wake Me Up
From This Bad Dream*

Hami Trinh, 16

Sanford, NC

@htrinhart

IT'S A BIZARRE THING,
TO BE A PERSON WITH MENTAL ILLNESS,
AND TO BE SUDDENLY THROWN INTO ISOLATION WITH
THE REST OF THE WORLD, DUE TO A PANDEMIC.

IT'S ALMOST LIKE,
I KNEW IT WAS COMING, BUT I NEVER COULD HAVE
PREDICTED WHAT IT MEANT FOR PEOPLE LIKE ME.

AS I LOCK MYSELF INSIDE,
I BEGIN TO REALIZE THAT I RELIED ON THE OUTSIDE
TO HIDE FROM BEING STUCK AS I AM NOW —
TO AVOID HAVING TO FACE MY OWN MIND.

IT'S UNSETTLING,
TO THINK THAT IT TOOK A PANDEMIC TO FEEL AS IF
THE WORLD IS FINALLY AT THE PACE
I'VE BEEN AT MY ENTIRE LIFE.

BUT NOW...

I FEEL AS IF I AM
RE LAPSING

LIKE THE HABITS I'VE BEEN TRYING TO GET RID OF
BY DISTRACTING MYSELF WITH WORK AND SCHOOL
ARE SLOWLY BUILDING UP AGAIN.

BECAUSE I CAN'T STAND MY THOUGHTS
AND BEING ALONE WITH MY MEMORIES.

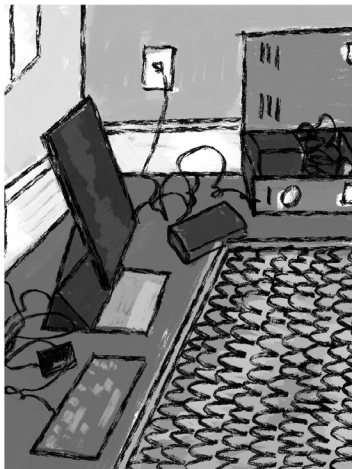
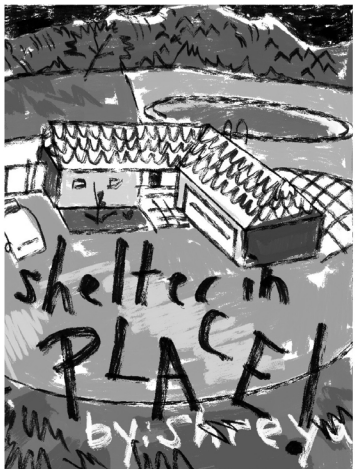
SO I SPEND HOURS WRAPPED UP TRYING
TO SLEEP

HOURS SCROLLING THROUGH MY PHONE
OR SOMETIMES, I THROW MYSELF INTO PROJECTS
TO SATISFY MY NEED FOR CONSTANT PRODUCTIVITY,
WHICH IS, A PRODUCT OF MY CULTURE AND UPBRINGING.
A CULTURE THAT I AM NOW TRAPPED WITH
IN ISOLATION.

I AM NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO NEEDED AN ESCAPE FROM AN
UNHEALTHY HOME ENVIRONMENT.

I GUESS,
WE HAVE TO MANAGE THIS DETRIMENTAL CYCLE.
SOMEHOW.

It's A Bizarre Thing
Venice Faye, 18
Mount Vernon, WA
[@kingvxn.art](https://www.instagram.com/kingvxn.art)





Shelter in Place!
Shreya Patel, 16
San Jose, CA
[@reya.art](https://www.instagram.com/reya.art)

COVID's Impact on Creativity

Jennifer Hu interviewed some artists and musicians on how their work and life was impacted by the pandemic. While there are obvious negatives like the lack of jobs, there's also a thin silver lining in having so much time to dedicate to creativity and one's craft.

1

WHAT ARE YOUR FEELINGS ABOUT THE PANDEMIC AND HOW HAVE YOU APPROACHED IT?

2

AS A MUSICIAN/ARTIST, HOW HAS THIS IMPACTED WHAT YOU DO?

GRAE VIOLETT

Grae Violet is a teen singer and songwriter from Olympia. As a Youth Ambassador at Town Hall, YouthSpeaks Spokes Intern, SAM Teen Advisory Group member, and many others, Grae plays a very active role in her community. Even in quarantine, she has continued to stay connected by attending online workshops and other events.

1

I feel like this pandemic is horrible, of course, but I also feel like it is showing us our shortcomings as a country and even as a world. The fact that not everyone can get care is insane to me, and the fact that washing one's hands and keeping clean has to be on a sign is surprising. I feel like because of this pandemic some people are doing the basics, which honestly frustrates me. Some things should be done regardless of a pandemic. On a more positive note, I feel like this pandemic has brought more connectivity to people, especially the artistic community.

2

As a musician and poet, I haven't been able to gig or go to any of my programs in person. However most of the places that I work at have been amazing at meeting up online and creating art, especially YouthSpeaks and Totem Star. Because I currently live in Olympia, going to in person events in Seattle was something that wasn't always possible for me. Now that everything is online, I find myself able to attend more events now that the only access need is a phone or laptop. For instance, I've attended several virtual open mics, workshops, and readings, all from a screen. It was an interesting thing to get used to at first, but everyone involved really made the effort to keep the same energy levels as they did in person and make great use of all the functions on group call platforms. And it's not just the organizations that I am apart of. Individual artists and groups from all over are banding together to still facilitate and create art in these trying times. Even though this situation is not ideal, as an artistic community, I think we are making the very best of it. I am very proud of us for that.

Follow Grae on Instagram: [@graedreamer](#)

ELISSA MARTIAL

Elissa Martial is a teen artist in the Seattle area. Her artwork was featured in our second exhibition "Coming Home" for Student Art Spaces. Besides posting her artwork regularly on social media, her most recent project involves creating an online art exhibition for her school, all while staying isolated in her home.



1

COVID-19 hit us all hard. As a student, my school district was among the first to cancel in-person classes and begin a remote learning program. But even weeks before that, our community was feeling the effects. Important events were cancelled, including my own (school hosted) volunteer trip that was going to take place in June. The virus, and all the changes it caused, were all anybody could talk about. There's no doubt that COVID-19 is real and serious. Precautions are a must, and I thank my school for taking the actions it did. That said, the widespread virus induced panic was and is unnecessary. Unfortunately, panic does not equal progress. If it did, this virus and all other major global issues would have long vanished. Instead, panic just compounds trouble, as it leads to racism, mass stockpiling, and the instinct to believe that everyone else is your enemy when the truth is the opposite. Panic-induced action does not keep us safe. Informed action keeps us safe. In accordance to this belief, I've tried my best to stay informed and logical. A lot has changed and it's likely that more will change, but the best I can do is be flexible and stay optimistic. We'll get through tough times, like we always do!

2

As an artist, I am fortunate that the virus doesn't hinder my ability to create. In fact, by some twist of luck, the self-quarantine only allows me more time to make art. I'm not one to turn down an opportunity, even though it might be caused by an unfortunate outside event. I've been using this time to improve my skills and express myself. One project I am particularly excited about, and feel is extremely necessary in times like this, is an online exhibition I am currently working on along with a classmate. In a time where our school's artist community is separated and isolated, my classmate and I are trying our best to bring us together. I believe that even though we don't share the same studio space anymore, we can still create something beautiful together. Another aspect of the exhibition is to provide something to be passionate about in a time where some of us might feel lost. I know I felt overwhelmed and confused at first, but finding strength in others and a common purpose helped me a lot. I hope to apply that effect in the art community, so that, if we so choose to, student artists can direct our artistic passion towards a collaborative exhibition that shows off what we can do as a community in isolation.



Follow Elissa on Instagram: [@wavylinesem](https://www.instagram.com/wavylinesem)

KEVEN GOH

Keven Goh is a teen musician based in the Seattle Area. His band, Box to Go, has just recently released their first single “Please Don’t Make Me” on Spotify and is continuing to create music (at a safe distance) in this quarantine.



1

Coming from an Asian American background, I really noticed that the level of concern within my community was significantly higher than perhaps the rest of the country on average, especially in my parents. While I don't feel personally threatened by the virus, in the beginning I found myself worrying constantly for my friends and family in China. The past few summers I've been helping organize a branch of a non-profit summer camp that hosts summer camps for young Chinese kids all over the nation, so it was especially stressful to think about what those families must have been going through and what they may still be struggling with right now.

While it seems to have died down with stricter quarantine regulations being put in place, the wave of racism against Asians of all nationalities when the pandemic first broke out was upsetting to say the least. If one is so worried about contracting a disease from an Asian person, I don't see how it's productive to do things like physically assault them or touch them in any harassing manner.

2

As a musician, the pandemic has been especially irritating, as it has effectively halted the growth of my band that had just begun to get gigs around Bellevue and the Seattle area. We started off as a group of friends making comedic musical sketches on my Instagram account. In a stroke of luck it actually got us invited to play at a few places, including the Student Art Spaces showcase that was unfortunately cancelled. Because of the quarantine, not only did our shows get cancelled, we can't even fall back on going back to the funny Instagram songs.

Despite everything, though, I'm really thankful that in this time where we all have to focus on ourselves and our own health, people still find time to listen to our music. We put out our first single on Spotify around when the quarantine first started and were floored by the amount of support we got from all our friends. I have faith that the art community worldwide will come out stronger from this event, as art in all forms has been with us through many adversities throughout history.

Follow Box to Go on Instagram: [@boxtogo_music](https://www.instagram.com/boxtogo_music)





THE RAINY

The Rainy is an indie rock band based in Tokyo, Japan, whose sound is influenced by shoegaze, post rock and alternative music. The Rainy started in 2017 and currently has three members: Ui Iwasaki on vocals, Hikaru Saito on drums, and Yoshia Yasuda on bass. They also feature piano, guitar and synth in their songs. Their most recent release, "anata no umi", was released earlier this year and is available in all streaming platforms.

The following is a translation.

1

YOSHIA YASUDA: I felt that Japanese people's perspective on music and the old way of thinking still remained in the general public.

There are things that I can see and feel because I am a music activity side, but there are many people who are not, most of the people in Japan are far from music and art, but such people I feel again the temperature difference between them.

This is a feeling similar to the "sense of alienation" that I feel when I am engaged

in music activities in Japanese society even before the COVID-19 problem. I think we need to think carefully about this feeling and problems. Because we have to think about it so that we don't make "music and art activity" a boring activity that just repeats itself. We need to think about why we do music activities and how we convey these music activities. But there is no answer. That is because I think that you should ask yourself questions in your daily life and activities, share them with

peers, and feed them.

These problems in the relationship between Japanese society and music were clarified again by the influence of COVID-19. We believe that live houses and their organizations will be culled, and people with creative activities and creativity can survive this crisis and make new management activities and projects. I think COVID-19 is giving us and the music industry around us such a turning point.

UI IWASAKI: COVID-19 is like an unseen natural disaster, and we have an uncertain anxiety about its impact. I felt that viruses were horrifying things that made us distrust and die.

We are being tested to see if we can act calmly and reasonably.

HIKARU SAITO: The pandemic, which poses a variety of threats to people, the economy and society, needs to end soon. But, I noticed many things because of this situation. Having gathered with the members, performing live, releasing new songs, etc., I realized that such everyday life was special for me. I reaffirmed my desire to continue my artistic activities. I also noticed that we need to raise our voices to protect our place. Especially, it's important what young people can do now.



2

YOSHIA YASUDA: Because it is a Japanese society where it is hard to do music activities (I think that there are more means and media to convey than in old Japan), we would like to think about communities, places, activities that should be protected. If there is something we can do, I would like to support something.

This time, we contributed the music to the compilation album organized by the live house you are taking care of. The proceeds of the album will be used to fund the losses caused by the impact of COVID-19.

It's a pain for us to stop the live performance or stop the activity, but I think it gave me another chance to think about the activity and production, so I take it positively.

I don't know how this situation will change from now on, but I would like to prepare with hope for the next activity.

UI IWASAKI: We are forced to limit our music activities. We cannot even get together and practice. Our lives are getting harder. I am thinking about how to continue my activities. I am expanding my imagination and creativity. I believe there is music that I can make now. I love the music and I want to love this "now".

HIKARU SAITO: As the band, all the lives are canceled, and we can't gather now. But we want to effectively utilize this time. We enjoy preparing new works and improving our skills. I believe we can do more stoic activities when the situation calms down.





Everyday feels connected to the next. Endless weeks. Bottomless.

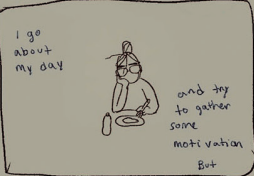


But at the same time they feel

too short.



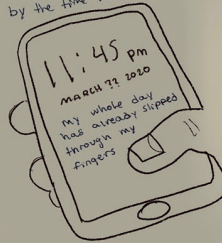
Everyday I wake up



I go about my day

and try to gather some motivation. But

by the time I do,

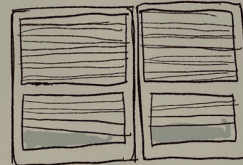


I know that a person's worth.



Isn't supposed to be determined by their productivity

but



sometimes I really can't help but feel totally worthless.

Productivity
Alexia Giselle , 17
Connecticut
@rrrraptor

the roaring twenties.

Written by Ritisha Keswani

a decade of economic growth,
widespread prosperity,
and pandemics.
a break.
for the universe,
for us.
we've watched our home
endure monstrosities.
we've sinned,
we've made it suffer.
now it's our turn.
our turn to go through unrest,
our turn to suffer,
our turn to slowly die.
we watch the earth heal
and prosper without us out there.
we watch/dwell from our windows,
confined in our houses.
karma;
the cycle of life.
we created this for ourselves,

we suffocated our home,
so now we suffocate.
we're put in our real places,
the mirror in front of us.
after a hundred years,
we face another pandemic,
his message that it's time,
time for a clean up.



Swing Set
Jo Gaffney, 17
Salt Spring Island, BC Canada
[@jo.gaffney](https://www.instagram.com/jo.gaffney)

social distancing
Charis Cacal, 16
Allen, TX
[@charis.cacal](https://twitter.com/charis.cacal)









Stoplight
Lillyanne F., 17
Los Angeles, CA
[@lillanecc](#)



Daily news
Alice Mao, 18
Seattle, WA
[@alicemaoart](#)

The Ravening of Revelations
Abigail Lee, 18
Bellevue, WA
[@spaghtitty](#)

The Ravening of Revelations

Trumpets, Fire, Earthquakes
Pes-ti-lence

a fatal epidemic
Angels, Clouds, Jerusalem
reborn.

What is sadness but serendipity?

What is crisis but conversion?

You see Patmos in the pandemic
Prayer as a waiting room
The end as a solution

It isn't fair

He who testifies to these things says, "Yes, I am coming soon."

I will not be saved from sickness or sin
Amen. Come, Lord Jesus.

I am the dirt under your fingernails

The grace of the Lord Jesus be with God's people
Salvation cannot be the only solution
Amen.





Art by **James Mee**

 @thetrippingnews_

Into the world

Kevin Wang, 18
Rancho Cucamonga, CA



There are things we aren't in control of,
Like the closures of a purpose in living;
But changing behaviors isn't the solution.

The ailments of your anxiety-ridden self
Exist in a twister of why's, how's, and causes
Blown out of the corporeal edges.
But approaching the eye of the storm
Whilst answering the problems with changes,
Will pull you deeper to your heart's agnostics.

Confront yourself.
The beating of your heart thumping slowly
As you finally meet yourself since forever,
Learning why you do, how you move,
And causes that make you who you are.
The eye of the storm never felt calmer before.

And you'll settle the fears, the scary futures,
The painful behavior of forced change.
Because you are still standing—
You will walk around the obstacles ahead.

A whim

Laura Poma, 18
New York City, USA

I once spent a day walking around Queens with one of the most beautiful people I know
We changed course randomly,
allowed ourselves to enter and exit shops and restaurants on a whim
tracing a whimsical path that made familiar settings seem alien
Our surroundings didn't matter as much as the company

I remember sitting in a theater in the middle of a showing and thinking
all I want in this moment is to sit across from him and stare
memorize his face and etch it into memory—
I kept quiet, and we stayed until the end of the film

I've decided to make a promise to myself
After we are released from this nightmare
(six feet be damned)
I will run like a child does into a heavy rain,
laughter ringing at the rapture of being enveloped in a heavenly spring,
And like the barren land renourished by the torrent,
I will be fulfilled by the commonplace and the ordinary
I will stand in front of everyone I love and let my eyes drink in the way their lips curl when
they smile
the way the space between their eyes creases with wonderment,
the wisps of hair that frame their face

I will dance in the sun and feel every inch of my body warming in its all-seeing gaze,
and I will not wish for more beyond the sensation of another heartbeat pressed up against
mine in an embrace,
a chorus of joy and laughter,
a neverending reminder that I am and that I love
I will find beauty in the simplest gestures and resist the urge to document it for any audience.



*And most of all, I think,
laying in the darkness of our
isolation,
I will act on every whim,
Allow myself to be guided by impulse
like a newborn creature unaware of
consequence,
unburdened by regret.*

Solitude

Allison Tran, 16

St. Paul, Minnesota, USA

[@huim1ngji](#)

My Unapologetic Love of Quarantine

Written by Rachel Gima

IT STARTED ABOUT A WEEK AFTER SCHOOL WAS CANCELLED. The exciting thought of quarantining ourselves with tubes of Clorox Wipes and rolls of toilet paper diminished rather quickly in the days that followed the initial announcement. My friends were all complaining (through group chats, of course, because *social distancing!*) about the inescapable boredom that blanketed the town so heavily it seemed to suffocate the life underneath its cover. It seemed that I was the only one who was comforted by the warmth and security it provided.

I, for the first time since I began high school, was consistently sleeping 9+ hours a night, waking up refreshed, running 3 miles a day, eating my greens, studying, reading the Bible, and spending quality time with Netflix. I was insanely happy.

Once I realized that, I knew something was off. Why was I happy? I was a high schooler with midterms approaching, AP exams creeping around the corner, and on top of that, I was in quarantine in the middle of a literal global pandemic. This

was most definitely *not* the time to be happy. And that's when I began to feel it.

We all know the feeling. It's a reproving voice, continuously nagging at you in the back of your head as you try to push it away. It's a small pit in your stomach - yes, small, but its ever-presence induces a tingle of nausea that couples with the anxiety building up inside you, telling you that your feelings are wrong. It's guilt.

But what, I asked myself, did I have to be guilty for? Confusion abounded in my head. So, naturally, I did what any normal human being in 2020 would: I typed my problem into Google.

What does guilt feel like? I immediately received the logical answer I knew I would inevitably see; the answer, or rather, the delusion, that I've labored under for years: that guilt only occurs when you've done something wrong.

I knew that I, externally, had done nothing immoral. In fact, this was likely one of the most serene and productive times of my life. Suddenly, it clicked. That was the problem.

Throughout my life, I have always been taught to be grateful and empathetic. The former humbles one, and allows one to see the world with a deeper understanding. And the latter is, by definition, understanding another's feelings so well that you share them. But society has twisted these words of wisdom into a harmful message.

“**BE GRATEFUL FOR
WHAT YOU HAVE,
BECAUSE SOMEONE OUT
THERE HAS IT WORSE.**”

In quarantine, I had time to reflect upon my feelings, and I was joyously thankful for my happiness, for it was peace that I hadn't felt in years. But how could I feel happy when others were suffering? My thoughts seemed to endlessly bicker inside my mind.

It's a pandemic. People are suffering. People are dying. These words are incredibly hard to write, but they're the truth. And in the midst of it all, there I was, encased in an invisible bubble that prevented me from feeling the sadness that the rest of the world was aching from. *Be grateful for what you have, because someone out there has it worse.* By that, I couldn't be happy, because others were suffering.

But it is (like most societal constructs) wrong. This diminishes the intrinsic

individuality of humankind, minimizing everyone's struggles by comparing it to an invisible third party. So don't listen to it. Instead, find solace in solidarity.

I know I'm not alone in feeling guilty. Even though it feels like it, and I have no proof (yes, zero, absolutely none) that I'm not alone, I've convinced myself that there are others who feel the same way as I did. Others who are focusing on keeping themselves healthy and happy in a time of struggle. And I'm here to tell you to *not apologize for taking care of yourself*. You are not a bad person because of your happiness. You are not a bad person because you decide to not read every. single. article. about every. single. bad. thing. that happens in the world today.

Remember that the purpose of quarantine and social distancing is to keep everyone healthy. That includes yourself. Do not feel guilty for not feeling sad. The messages that society sends have more mixed signals than the guys I talk to, so don't listen to them either.

Listen to yourself. Listen to your heart. Do what makes you happy. Love every moment of quarantine. Use social distancing to relax your body, soul, and mind. Take care of you. And never feel guilty for it. ■



Quarantine Spotlight: Rayna Mathis

Written by **George Segress**

Seattle, being the first hit region in the country, was among the first to shut down completely. The air seems to move slower, streets and sidewalks lay barren like a Fallout game, and all of our events have been cancelled. This has hit disadvantaged students especially hard, barring them from receiving adequate education. They do not have the luxuries of extensive libraries, volunteering opportunities, or even stable and consistent internet connections that may be inhibited by family members needing to work from home. But for these people there remains hope for their continued education: people giving up their time and resources, like Rayna Mathis, to help their education and stave off Summer Learning Loss.

Rayna has worked throughout this time to open and maintain a 'little free library'. She worked, before the quarantine, as a coordinator of school and education programs at SAM, bringing together kids from different backgrounds across Seattle. As soon as SAM shut down, Rayna recognized the inequity in the ways that kids were receiving their educations and wanted to help in any way that she could. For her, it took the form of creating something that has always helped her, little free libraries.

These are tiny community run libraries that provide free books to anyone walking down the street. The books do not always need to be returned and can be added to your own personal collections, if you so choose. They are a way that people can give back to their communities, and provide joy to those that find them, including Rayna herself, "I've always had interesting experiences with little free libraries.". She told a story about how after losing someone in her life, she found a Maya Angelou poem about death in a little free library while on a walk and has loved them ever since. This was her way of giving back to the community, sharing moments of possible hope and comfort through a medium that has always been there for her. The library, started soon after the lockdown orders, has grown, with her friends, and even strangers contributing, Rayna again, "to date we've had well over 300 books.". As this quarantine continues, it is the individual acts of generosity of those like Rayna that will allow our communities to keep strong.



Quarantine Activities

Fionn Hui, 17
Chicago, USA
[@fidorange](#)



Quarantine Game Night
Anais St. Amant, 17
New Jersey, USA
[anaisportfolio.weebly.com](#)



For Now
Camryn Soo, 17
Seattle, WA
[@busy.as.cam.be](https://www.instagram.com/busy.as.cam.be)



Predictions

Angela Bi, 17

Los Altos Hills, CA

[@unmeimei](#)



Map of Participants



MEET THE TEAM



Alice Mao, 18

Art Director/Project Lead

[@alicemaoart](#)

Alice Mao is an emerging artist and Co-Founder of Student Art Spaces. While she primarily works in oils, she also makes digital artwork and gouache paintings. She has exhibited work in Chicago, Seattle, and New York, and is looking to study art at Yale University this fall. More of her work can be found on her website alice-mao.com.



Luana Góes, 17

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

[@luana.g.m](#)

Luana Góes is an artist and designer from northern Brazil and the engagement director at Student Art Spaces. Her art is often mixed media, if not digital, using mainly acrylics and watercolor, and she also has a passion for video editing and music. She loves interacting and helping the SAS team, and you can find her on instagram, [@luana.g.m](#).



Kelly Wang, 17

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

[@kelsigns](#)

Kelly Wang is an illustrator and graphic designer from Seattle and the social media co-director at Student Art Spaces. Currently, she does digital freelance work on her Instagram while also managing a small online clothing business, Cerulean.



Madison Bitna, 17

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

[@madi.bdt](#)

Madison Bitna is a hobby artist from New York City, and a current graphic designer at Student Art Spaces. She mainly works traditionally with pencil, but is currently learning other mediums such as acrylics and digital. In her spare time, she is also involved in her school's art magazine, as well as leadership and science clubs.



Sheena Lai, 17

Editor

[@sh.eens](#)

Sheena is an artist focusing on the flow and interactions of modern society. She is also a Thai food enthusiast and tangerine addict.



Jennifer Hu, 16

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

@art_jhu

Jennifer Hu is a portrait artist in both digital and traditional art. While she mainly enjoys art as a hobby, she also does commissions on the side to buy numerous sketchbooks and art supplies. She looks forward to getting more involved in Student Art Spaces and the art community!



Madison Shimkus, 16

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

@11chikyuu

Madison is a hobbyist artist that is mainly skilled in digital art. She enjoys creating atmospheric scenes with her work. Additionally, she also loves 80's music, nature, and fashion. She hopes that she will be able to implement some of her artistic ability with her future career.



Julianna Barrenos, 16

Graphic Designer/Layout Artist

[@arch.134](#)

Julianna Barrenos is an artist mostly interested in portrait drawing and design. She mostly works digitally, but also loves to draw portraits of influential people in society. Also, with her passion of making art, she believes design can have a grand influence on how we view architecture.

THANK YOU!

