

# **NOVUS BIS SCHOOL MAGAZINE**

**CREATIVITY**

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**CREATIVITY**

**CREATIVITY**

INVENTIONS

INSPIRATION

IDEAS

ART

IMAGINATIVE

GENIUS



# EDITORIAL

It is with great pleasure that we assume responsibility for BIS's School Magazine, *Novus*, continuing the high-quality writing, eye-catching designs, exceptional effort and commitment with a new team of editors, writers and designers. For the past two years, I have been an active writer for the magazine and always admired the immense amount of work that goes on behind the scenes that brought my work to life. Representing the new editorial team, we gratefully thank the previous editorial team (Seonju, Star and Gia Han) and other previous writers and designers for their hard work.

As we transition to this new era of *Novus*, it has inspired this publication's theme: Creativity.

Creativity is a surprisingly multi-layered concept to grasp; it is so encompassing of every field, subject, even in our daily lives, that it is quite difficult to define. Creativity could be thought of as opportunities for something new and original, making way for something that breaks the mold of tradition or something that challenges heuristics we take advantage of every day and ask, "What if?", "Can this happen?"

If you want to read a great discussion on what creativity is and how it relates to forms it can take, like literature or social media, explore the article "Creative Works: The Source of the Greatest Opportunities or a Waste of Time?" by Olivia (pages #6 - #10). Creativity, originality and imagination are synonymous however, as the article has very delicately analysed, there are still distinctions between them. The article states a valuable point about the importance of willpower and perseverance that comes in producing something that is creative. This is colloquially known as 'trust the process', and it is a great point because anything that requires creativity will inevitably require a lot of effort and a lot of time committed. Additionally, creativity will inevitably lead to some hiccups and failures along the way. Therefore, the ability to continue past the failures is crucial to getting to the finishing line.



Can you imagine what the world of literature would be like if writers, such as Shakespeare, Jane Austen, Kafka, J.R.R Tolkien, did not pick up their pens? Can you imagine how different the digital world would be if developers like Mark Zuckerberg and Steve Jobs did not take the financial risk and commit to their inventions? Can you imagine the lack of knowledge that could result if esteemed scientists like Charles Darwin, Isaac Newton and Marie Curie gave up at the first experiment? The world would be completely devoid of substance with no heart to it. “Domino Art – What Six Years of Mistakes Have Taught Me” by Quang Hung (pages #11 – #14) is a remarkable biography about commitment to an unusual and unique art.

One of the beauties of creativity is that due to its transformative nature, even literature, art, and forms similar can transform or break off into new, innovative branches. For the art history lovers, explore “*A Look into the Victorian Culture at the Start of the Romanticism Era*” by Gia Khanh (pages #53 – #55) and “*What is Minimalism?*” by Ngoc Linh (pages #56 – #60) to see how art has developed over the centuries. For the comic book lovers, read the reviews of some praised manhwas in “*Stunning Spectacular Stories*” by Ashley and Linh Chi (pages #20 – #31).

However, creativity always carries the implication that something positive will always come out of it. As you will see throughout this issue, that is not the case; in fact, arguably everything has a positive and negative outcome, and it is never so simply polarised. If you are a passionate gamer, read “The Ever Growing Status of Gaming, Good or Bad?” by An Duy (pages #61 – #63).

In conclusion, creativity can simply be described as an opportunity. What the opportunity entails is up to anyone who decides to commit and persist through the arduous process. Maybe the process can lead to something life-changing or end up failing with absolutely nothing done. But, as mentioned before, you need to ‘trust the process’. Even if everything goes wrong, a failure is still a lesson. Creativity may be a very broad and debatable subject however, one thing is for certain: there is always something you can take away from it. I hope this issue gives you a glimpse of motivation, broadens your mind and encourages you to just ‘go for it’!

Nguyen Thuc Anh To



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# **Creative Works: The Source of the Greatest Opportunities or a Waste of Time?**

Written by Dakyung (Olivia) Hwang Y8

Designed by Jaea Lee Y8








**“Make visible what, without you, might perhaps never have been seen,” is a quote by Oprah Winfrey on the topic of creativity. She states that a creative mindset is willing to break through traditional concepts and leave a change in the world. In this ever-changing world, creativity acts as a foundation for the beginning of every new idea - the fuel behind the world driven by humans. However, creativity gives rise to some controversial questions as to whether creativity is an efficient use of time or not. Some may argue that creativity is a mere imagination only existing in people’s mind and that originality is not necessary to the world, while some may say that if creativity is pointless, nothing ever is either. Ultimately, the questions are: What is creativity? What makes something creative? Why is it so important?**

**As creativity is such a broad topic, there are countless different ideas of its definition, none more validated than the other. There are some misconceptions, however, of the values of creativity. Originality, imagination, creativity - many would argue that these words work together synonymously, and the internet would not prove them wrong. The denotative definitions of these words all direct to one another, but the connotations tell a different story. According to the Oxford Learners Dictionary, creativity is “the use of skill and imagination to produce something new or to produce art.” Despite this, it is hard to say that creativity always requires originality, though originality requires creativity – a bit like how the characteristics of a square and a rectangle match up so that a square is a rectangle, but a rectangle is not always a square. A rectangle and square share two key characteristics: having four straight sides and right angles. Despite being similar in description, a square has an additional quality which is that its sides are equal in length. For a shape to be considered a rectangle, it only needs to match the two key characteristics, meaning a square could classify as a rectangle. In comparison, originality could be classified as one of the many types of creativity, however, originality is not a necessity to being creative. Original ideas and developments can be creative, but creativity does not have much to do with originality. Creativity is more to do with acting on one’s intuition, rather than in favour of other people.**





But does that mean any unoriginal imagination is considered creative as long as it is by one's will power? Creativity sparks from imaginations, but an imagination does not have to be a creative thought. Imagination is merely an interesting thought anyone can have, constantly thinking of new ideas, while creativity is a motivation and ability to bring that thought to life.

Amongst this play of definitions, people have started to ask: if creativity is merely a making of ideas and turning them into reality, what is the purpose fuelling their motivation? On this giant rock packed with eight billion people, many fight for originality for the sake of it being the spark of personality amongst this technologically complex world. People tend to get caught up in this constant 'competition' of new ideas. Writing books, painting pictures, composing music - all these creative works - is their sole purpose just entertainment? If so, why is social media - another form of creative entertainment - considered a waste of time? Social media and, for example, literature are both ways of displaying people's ideas and expressing themselves. They are both a form of Freedom of Speech to some extent in their own diverse ways. Social media reaches a wider audience with rapid stream of content and literature allows people to be more abstract with fantastical elements.

Social media is rarely seen as a way of being creative because of the fixed mindsets people have of it. Loved for its fast-paced entertainment, social media platforms build short attention spans, therefore, in order to catch the users' attention, people reduce serious content. Because most people are hyper-focused on being eye-catching, they lose individuality, doing things in a rush of competition. It is difficult to find someone who would call social media a 'creative place' because of the mindless thoughts people pour into it. Referring back to the definition of creativity and its difference between imagination, social media can be seen more as a publicised imagination, rather than a well-structured expression. Not everything on social media is always imaginative, original, or even interesting. Instead, it is a mere cluster of anything people press enter on.



A noticeable pattern in social media is trends - people doing the same thing repeatedly until they find another popular activity. Social media users sort of move as one whole, changing all together from trend to trend. There is no need for originality to become famous. The connotations for social media and trends are usually negative, mostly viewed as a waste of time or a bad influence. Social media is more about getting affected by people - that is where the word 'influencer' comes from - while literature is about attempting to affect others yourself. The sole purpose of literature is creativity and people are constantly attempting to break traditional concepts. New ideas are often praised and valued more than ones that are 'cliché.'

Though social media is currently seen as a waste of time, there are no specific characteristics of creative works it must meet to decide whether this opinion is true or not. Literature was only one of the many forms of expressing creativity, but it seems that it has become the most accepted form. But in the past, even literature was unappreciated until it started gaining attention in the 19th century. With time, the definition of creativity changed into a more diverse thought, and from then on, literature developed into the popular demand it is today. It may be that today, social media is the new form of creativity, just waiting to bloom. In the future, social media could be the more accepted, modern approach to creativity. Calling creativity a "waste of time," would be a refusal to move on from the past. They are not willing to make new developments, instead reliant on the things they have perfected before - for example, literature. Social media is in the middle of developing into something greater than what people have produced in the past. As Henri Matisse said, "Don't wait for inspiration. It comes while working."



As controversial as it may sound, creativity may be called a “waste of time.” Only difference being that it does not end there - creativity is a process that leads up to an outcome, however long it takes. Time is not the main issue regarding creativity. Sometimes, even the greatest opportunities may spark from hours of wasted time. It is not about the process of creating new ideas, but the will power to change the world in a way that one desires. With this in mind, it is safe to say that there are lots more to come and change with creative works and no biased mindset should stop that.





# ***Domino Art***

What six years of mistakes have taught me

An intricate arrangement lies before you. One knock, and a chain reaction ensues. A clickity-clack noise fills the room. Within a minute or two, a hard week's work is reduced to an unorganized mess.

What you have just read there is one slightly oversimplified depiction of domino art, a relatively young and modern form of expression in comparison to other forms that we often associate with the word 'art'. Domino art, put simply, involves the setting up of tiles, called dominoes, in complex arrangements. It culminates in the 'falldown', or the moment between the first and last domino is toppled. Within the 'falldown', the observer can witness the domino effect being used in various ways e.g., placing dominoes that resemble letters, symbols, and even 3D structures, or even some combination of the three. Like other forms of art, domino art is used to tell a story, evoke an emotion, and depict a scene. However, unlike other forms of art, the appeal of domino art lies not in a still, but rather in the motion of the dominoes during the 'falldown'. The enthralling element of the domino effect creates a sense of visual satisfaction for the viewer, which can result in a better state-of-mind after watching a domino arrangement, called a 'setup' within domino art circles, topple and crumble into a mess on the floor.

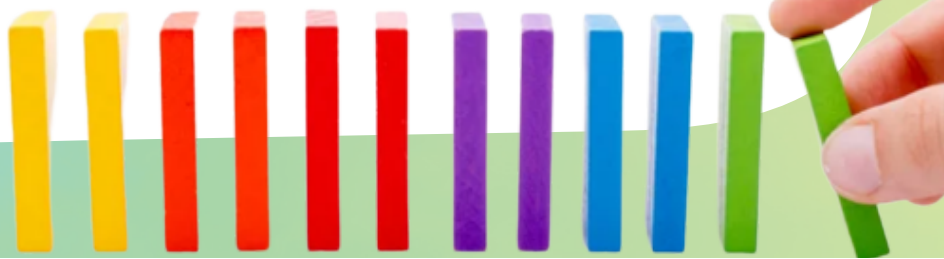




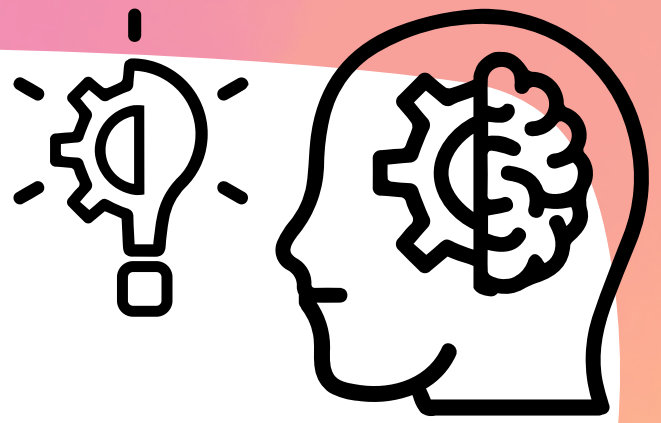
I built my first domino setup when I was 9 years old, and throughout these 6 years of experimenting and practicing the craft, I have learnt many things, of which three will be discussed.

One of the very first things that domino art has taught me is how to deal with mistakes and failure: all dominoes are required to topple for a successful falldown. As such, even a single domino that doesn't fall and trigger the next will mean that the falldown has failed. When faced with a failed falldown, a domino artist has two choices: to rebuild the entire setup up to that point, or to accept defeat and topple the rest down. Contrary to one might think, creating domino setups didn't necessarily teach me to persevere and rebuild every time that I face a failure. Instead, it taught me to make smart decisions with the time I have and making choices about which projects to continue pursuing and which not to. This filtering mechanic has contributed massively to the quality of my output, resulting in some of my best works that I am most proud of. Outside of domino art, it has been very crucial in developing time management for me as an IGCSE and IB student, now that I am required on a daily basis to make time for everything that is assigned to me, and to decide whether or not I will complete it to a great effort, or to simply tick off one item off my planner.

Patience is also a virtue that has guided me throughout these years. Domino setups take a very long time to make, something that is typical of art as a whole. What is also typical of art that applies to dominoes is that the artist can unintentionally destroy part of, or the whole of the piece that they are working on.







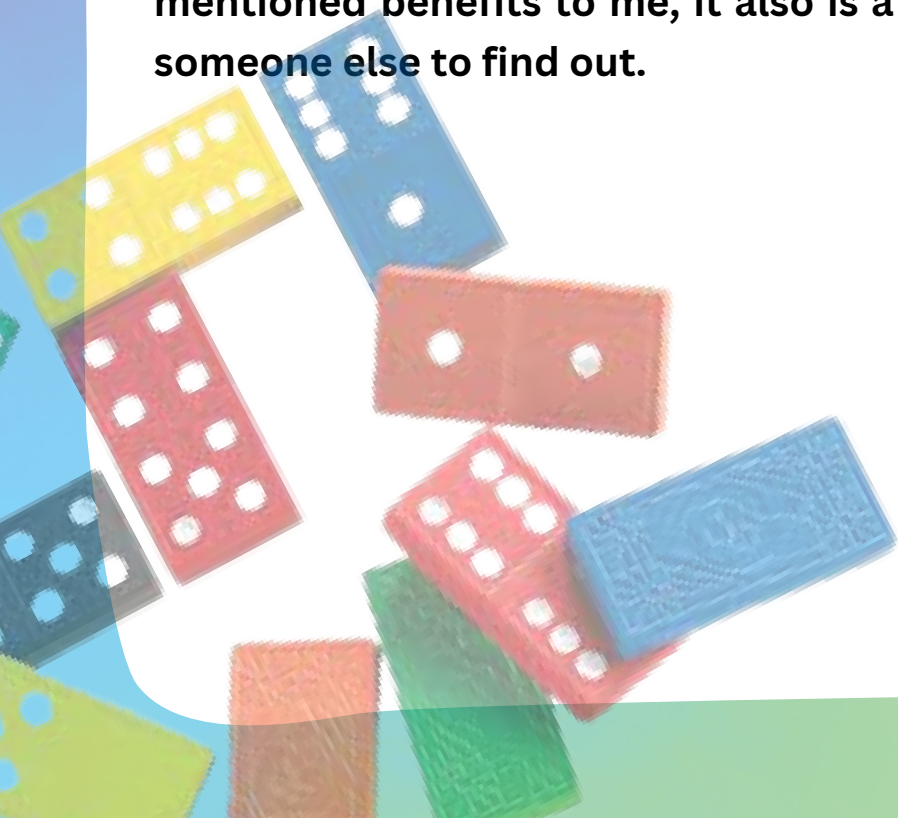
The sheer fragility of these domino arrangements demands a steady hand and a cool head. By creating a setup, I understand and agree with myself that the final product will take time, that I cannot expect it quickly, and that there will be mishaps along the way. I view these as simply part of the building process.

Finally, domino art has helped me become a more creative person. For one, throughout the 6 years that I have spent creating domino setups, I find myself getting more ideas of better quality for what to create, which has positively impacted my cognitive process. In addition, another big element of domino art that is also present in the broader chain reaction art genre is problem-solving, i.e. “How can I create a solution to this problem?” A domino artist runs into these questions all the time: “How can I improve the chances of the setup working?”, “How do I bridge these sections of the setup in the most appealing manner possible?”, etc., it’s these questions that work up the mind and help the artist brainstorm ideas to answer them, which will enhance and fine-tune the artist’s cognitive process. The brainstorming process is also transferrable to other areas as well because the ability to think of solutions is getting increasingly important in navigating and mastering the contemporary digital world.



A helpful effect of a creative mindset for me is that it helps me become more expressive and open about myself and my thoughts: I wasn't, and still isn't, someone with a lot of friends, and often times I would feel very stuck because I don't have anyone to talk to. Thus, dominoes and its ability to tell stories have become a sort of outlet for me to express myself to an audience, which helped to calm myself down at times. For instance, 'How does one spend the summer?', my most recent project, shows the progression of my mental health after my IGCSEs presented in dominoes and other chain reaction objects: the gradual increase in vibrancy and size of the setups in the video is intended to be a metaphor for the gradual development of my personality throughout summer break. The final product is also a very helpful piece of reflection for future reference.

I could go on and on about the precious things that I have learnt in the last six years of creating domino art, but space isn't unlimited and I will be unable to keep writing at some point. Ultimately, this art form has helped me immeasurably into becoming the person I am today, and outside of all the mentioned benefits to me, it also is a very interesting hobby for someone else to find out.







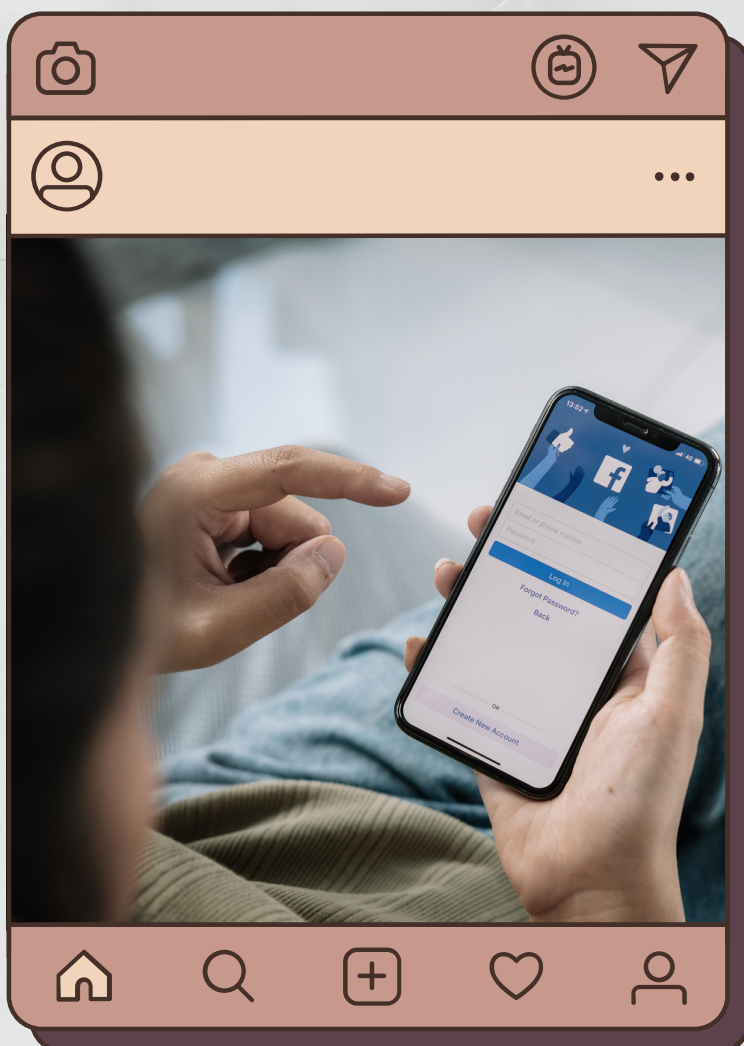
*Social Media*

**A WAY OF EXPRESSING  
CREATIVITY AND  
INDIVIDUALITY  
OR A BIG DISTRACTION ?**

Written by Seobin Yoon, Y9  
Designed by Khanh Hoa Le, Y11



Through development of technology, online platforms for people to share their thoughts, interests and experiences are becoming increasingly popular. Can you imagine your lives without social media - without YouTube, WhatsApp, Facebook, or Instagram? As most of the answers would be “no”, it is clear that social media has squeezed its way through people’s daily lives. Social media works in between people to achieve various forms of communication online, from ordinary text messaging to sharing photos, videos, and articles. However, there is controversy on whether social media is actually beneficial in some ways or not, whether it can be a source of creativity and innovation or just a big distraction.





# THE ADVOCATES

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An obvious benefit reflected from social media is that it enhances creativity. Creativity, as defined by the Cambridge Dictionary, is “the ability to produce original and unusual ideas, or to make something new or imaginative”. Focussing on posting materials on Facebook and Instagram, users must have a spark in their idea to post something that is completely different from the ones that they have posted in the past. Social media also triggers competitive traits among society. Not only people are trying to make their next post look better, but along with that, they have to stand out from a crowd of people doing the similar thing to get more famous. Competition, therefore, is a very important part of social media because it encourages people to be more innovative and creative.

Added to that, the system of ‘liking’ and ‘view count’ pressures people to cultivate more and better creativity throughout their usage of social media. Since many online users’ eyes are constantly exposed to many diverse posts, they will tend to seek out the most eye-catching posts that gives them attention. Furthermore, many popular posts provoke people’s emotions; making them laugh, cry, and more. To make many of the content people enjoy more, they have to experiment with different ideas and put them out to see the public’s reaction, either resulting in a success or a failure. Either way, people will continue to devise more of diversified post materials, improving their capability to have more flexible thoughts. This, I can call it the process of creativity and people will indeed be more creative trying to entertain and provoke more emotions of the society.



Additionally, social media lets people experience things in diverse perspectives. Thinking about topics from different points of view surely allows people to have a more creative mindset as they are learning information that they have not encountered before. Therefore, by the fact that social media allows people from all around the world to connect on one Internet platform, they create this new, digital world for people to share their culture, background, and beliefs. This could contribute to an increase in creativity through exposure to perspectives from outside the world people always came across.

## THE OPPONENTS

However, social media causes negative psychological effects such as addiction, depression and low self-esteem. To gain entertainment, many people nowadays mindlessly scroll through social media. In order to get many followers and subscribers, people try to show their best to let the others believe that they are perfect and live a relatively better and different life. Therefore, much of their audience will come to believe that these social media influencers are much better people than the ordinary ones. It can implant lower self-esteem, dissatisfaction, and depression, it can bring up feelings that some people are useless and unimportant to the world – worsened by the fact that human psychology can make people stick to it more and more, even though it negatively impacts them.



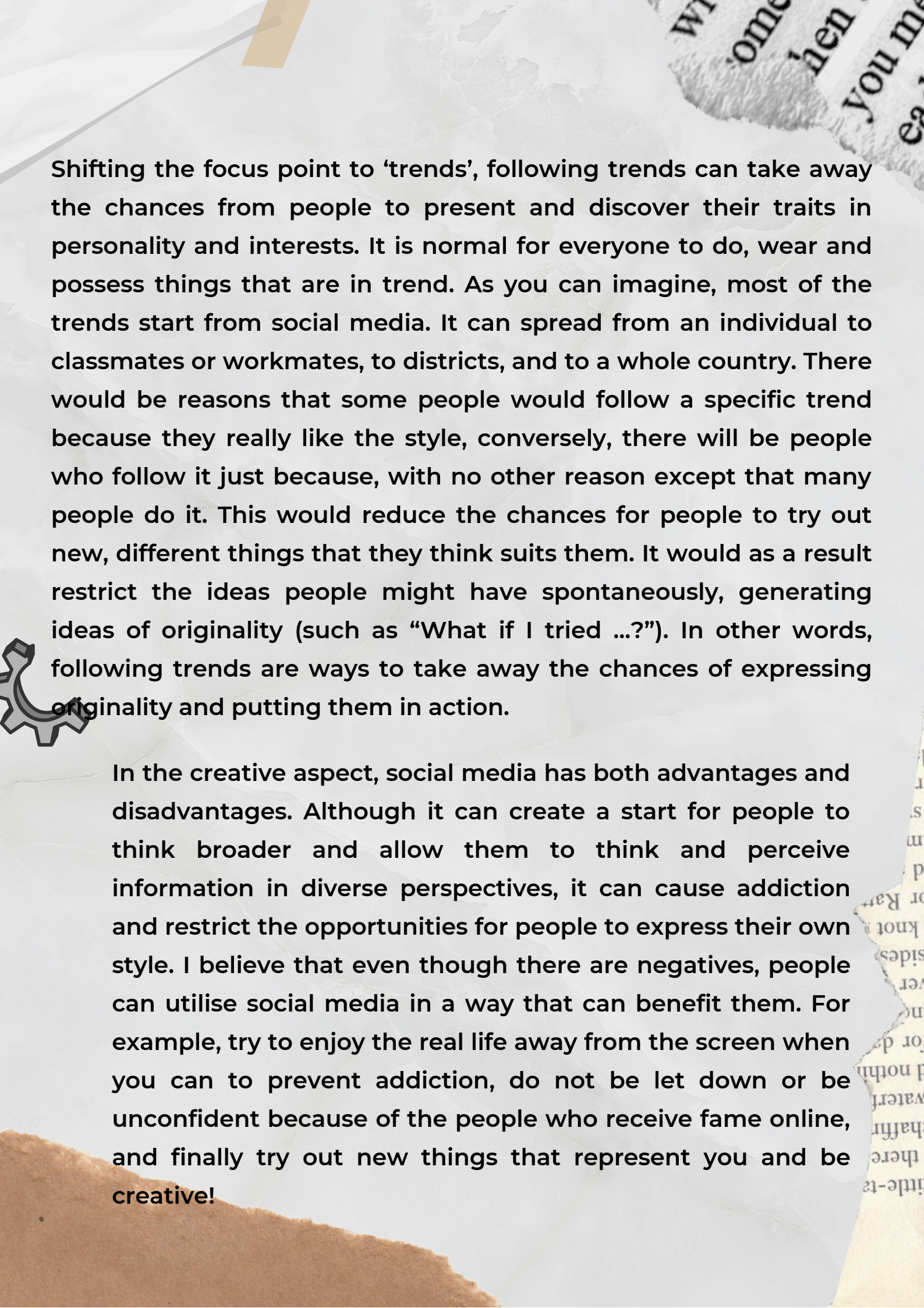


Also, viewing in a different perspective, the influencers who get lots of 'likes', subscribers and followers do not always get a positive outcome from social media. Being famous and receiving compliments triggers the brain's reward system, making people feel good. To feel more of those triumphant emotions, people will constantly post, consuming more of their time. This leads to what we tend to avoid, addiction.

So how does this link to creativity? Spending huge chunks of time by just scrolling through social media limits the opportunities to discover different perspectives in real life, which small and minor things we encounter every day could be an igniting spark of one's creativity. In addition, addiction leads to obsession over a single thing, which is a complete opposite to creativity. As creativity should allow people to explore different things, it follows by addiction, a negative that social media robs these influencers from. Thus, social media can work as a luring trap that confines people's thoughts and minds, making people log onto its platforms whenever they are available, planning out an uncreative life for everyone.







Shifting the focus point to 'trends', following trends can take away the chances from people to present and discover their traits in personality and interests. It is normal for everyone to do, wear and possess things that are in trend. As you can imagine, most of the trends start from social media. It can spread from an individual to classmates or workmates, to districts, and to a whole country. There would be reasons that some people would follow a specific trend because they really like the style, conversely, there will be people who follow it just because, with no other reason except that many people do it. This would reduce the chances for people to try out new, different things that they think suits them. It would as a result restrict the ideas people might have spontaneously, generating ideas of originality (such as "What if I tried ...?"). In other words, following trends are ways to take away the chances of expressing originality and putting them in action.

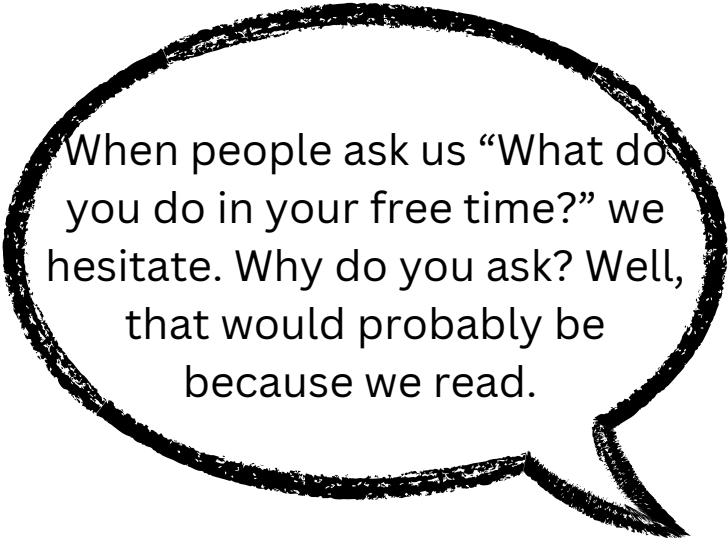
In the creative aspect, social media has both advantages and disadvantages. Although it can create a start for people to think broader and allow them to think and perceive information in diverse perspectives, it can cause addiction and restrict the opportunities for people to express their own style. I believe that even though there are negatives, people can utilise social media in a way that can benefit them. For example, try to enjoy the real life away from the screen when you can to prevent addiction, do not be let down or be unconfident because of the people who receive fame online, and finally try out new things that represent you and be creative!



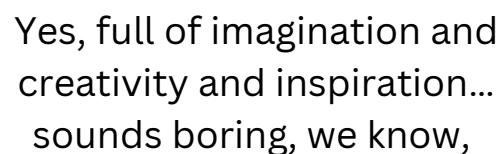
# Manhwa: Stunning Spectacular Stories

Written by Jie Rui Ashley Chng and Linh Chi Tran, Y11

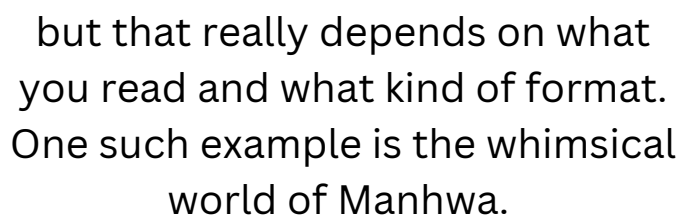
Designed by Yeonju (Rebecca) Yi, Y11



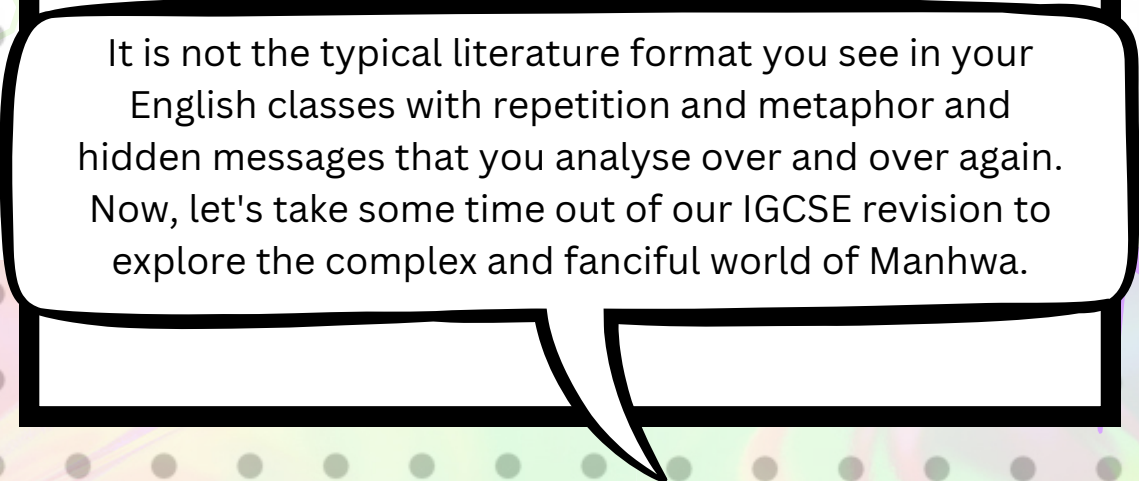
When people ask us “What do you do in your free time?” we hesitate. Why do you ask? Well, that would probably be because we read.



Yes, full of imagination and creativity and inspiration... sounds boring, we know,



but that really depends on what you read and what kind of format. One such example is the whimsical world of Manhwa.



It is not the typical literature format you see in your English classes with repetition and metaphor and hidden messages that you analyse over and over again. Now, let's take some time out of our IGCSE revision to explore the complex and fanciful world of Manhwa.



## Romance:

### “Roxanne” reviewed by Ashley

Summary: (ongoing)

After passing away as a normal, average Korean citizen, the main character finds herself reincarnated as Roxanne Agriche, a mere side villain in a fantasy novel she read in her previous life. It did not help in the slightest that this family she was born in is also known for their tyranny and villainy, meaning that she herself would have to work hard just to survive. After witnessing the traumatising passing of her brother in this new life, she decides to own her title of an Agriche and become exactly what she feared the most: a villain, just to prevent the impending death of the heroine’s older brother, hence the title of this manhwa.





First on our list is “Roxanne”, also known as “The Way to Protect the Heroine’s Older Brother”.

If you're looking for a female lead that could totally beat you up in a fight then this is exactly what you are looking for (If I’m being completely honest here, I mainly started this Manhwa just for the female lead).

The first and female lead is, of course, the titular character Roxanne Agriche.

The second and male lead is Cassius Pedelian, the said heroine’s brother in the title. The tension itself between the 2 leads is written so stunningly yet so riveting that it keeps you on your toes, looking forward to all the next interactions between them. However, the main focus is more so on the plot rather than on these 2 characters, so savour the Roxanne-and-Cassis interactions as much as you can!

And speaking of stunning, do not even get us started on the art. It is one of the most breathtakingly gorgeous works we have ever seen. The details, the colour scheme, even the fashion - everything was executed perfectly. Every scene in this manhwa is drawn as if it was a whole art piece you would find in a museum. Usually, the main focus is on the characters and their interactions or expressions but even the background of, for example, the mansion would have eye-catching, intricate designs on a simple cupboard.

We mentioned earlier how the main attraction to this story is the female lead, Roxanne, herself and of course that would need some explaining. She is one of the most intelligent, physically and mentally strongest, alluring people in the manhwa universe (And no, I’m not being biased, I swear...) One of my favourite scenes of this would be when we find out how Roxanne gains immunity to poison through the process of mithridatism and even takes advantage of the said poison in her bloodstream to tame creatures and build her own army of poisonous butterflies. It does not sound like a lot at first but imagine having to endure the pain of ingesting almost lethal doses of poison for the sake of surviving.

Overall, this is an outstanding manhwa with absolutely stunning, spectacular art, an intriguing plot line, and romance filled with tension. Also, do not especially forget the gorgeous characters here.



## “Your Smile is a Trap” reviewed by Linh Chi

Summary: (ongoing - 100 episodes)

In general, “Your smile is a trap” is a webcomic containing a significant amount of misunderstanding between the characters and lots of romantic moments. The main character, Kiyu - an ex-idol trainee who has lived his entire life being liked by all for his charming appearance - is determined to live a typical student life, however, he is socially awkward, therefore struggles to make friends. On the other hand, his new seatmate Cha Baek has a scary scowl, and a permanent frown on her face, seemingly antisocial.

The central theme of “Your smile is a trap” is coming of age, with the school serving as the primary location. It adopts the viewpoint of introverted viewers in a teenage story.





“Your Smile is a Trap” is a cute and adorable romance story. Throughout the story, the main characters Kiyu and Cha Baek empower each other as they strive to improve and grow. Designed wonderfully by comic artist and author Aengo, their deficiencies perfectly counterbalance one another. The primary objective of this pairing is to purposely push Kiyu and Cha Baek beyond their comfort zones and self-consciousness. For instance, Kiyu assists Cha Baek in strengthening her social skills, opening up, and following her interests; as a result, she encounters new individualities and engages more freely. Cha Baek, on the other hand, makes Kiyu feel more at ease, which gradually helps him deal with his fear and stress about making a public appearance, plus, igniting his old passion of becoming a trainee.

Without a doubt, "Your Smile is a Trap" is a unique love story with distinctive characters that deviate greatly from the normally strong, self-assured, and faultless archetypes. The story's central characters - Kiyul and Cha Baek - are now being developed more deeply by Aengo, laying the groundwork for furthering their complexity and individuality to develop them into more three-dimensional people.

To conclude, “Your Smile is a Trap” is brimming with lovely compassion and genuine comfort. Kiyu and Cha Baek are so absurdly adorable and beautiful that it would give you a toothache to look at them! Overall, this webcomic has great imagery and engaging scenarios. I look forward to the development in each character's personality as this manhwa/webtoon has a lot of potential.





## Comedy:

### “Eleceed” reviewed by Linh Chi

Summary: (ongoing - 185 chapters)

“Eleceed” is a part of the comedy action genre

In “Eleceed” there is a society called The Awakened, a group of people with superhuman talents that exist beneath the surface of the modern world. Many diverse Awakened clans exist in order to maintain secrecy and harmony. The Great Kayden, the most formidable Awakened, is a lone man. This comes to bite him in the back one day when someone manages to ambush and injure him. Kayden assumes the appearance of a cat he sees nearby to conceal and rest and unexpectedly he is now stuck in the form of a fat cat.

Here Jiwoo, our protagonist, a typical high school student who likes cats and frequently takes in stray animals. When Jiwoo meets Kayden in his cat form, he takes care of Kayden and gives him a place to live, Kayden quickly discovers that Jiwoo can relate to him. Later, Jiwoo is shown to be an Awakened, but he lacks training and has no idea that he is a member of a hidden society. Then, Kayden decides to take Jiwoo under his wing as a pupil. From then Jiwoo participated in many battles as well as formed new friends and connections.





The story of "Eleceed" is enjoyable and features several different themes, including humour, friendship, coming of age, action, and animals. The novel is fascinating and pleasant to read; it is a peaceful and calming manhwa centred on friendship. "Eleceed" features a number of distinct character archetypes, including the golden sunshine lovely person, the powerful, confident, and wealthy friend, and the reserved and timid friend... Despite the clichés, the author manages to bring these characters to life, allowing readers to connect with the comrade and sense the bond within the friendship group. Amazingly, the manhwa lets the audience feel like a member of such a particular friend group.

Contrary to other manhwas, where friendship feels forced, "Eleceed" offers a fantastic balance of action and comedy amongst the friends that created a tremendous dynamic friend group. Moreover, "Eleceed" goes into great length and provides a detailed analysis of how the characters' relationship develops. In several snippets, for example, the audience can observe how characters inherit each other's mannerisms after a long time of friendship, or how they can gauge each other's emotions and feelings. For instance, Jinwoo demonstrated the greatest development in enhancing and growing his strong mentality and physicality as well as demonstrating a competitive and ambitious thrive taken after Kayden and his friends.

Although I personally do not typically enjoy protagonists that are innocent and naive - like Jiwoo as these characters are typically unrelatable - "Eleceed" undoubtedly succeeds in pulling it off splendidly with Jiwoo, who somehow works perfectly with the concept. This narrative is enjoyable to read because of the lighthearted humour and the exciting action, which prevents it from being overly repetitive. Similarly, characters' facial expressions and comedic timing are usually endearingly amusing. It is adorable and enjoyable while with a good balance of trauma and terrible tragedies. "Eleceed" is approachable and has a strong sense of unity thanks to it incorporating elements of teenage life.

Suffice to say this is a great recommendation if you are looking for something lighthearted. Other similar recommendations: 'the return of mount hwa' / 'return of the blossoming blade', 'hardcore leveling warrior', 'The beginning after the end', 'second life ranker', 'the archmage returns after 4000 years' etc...

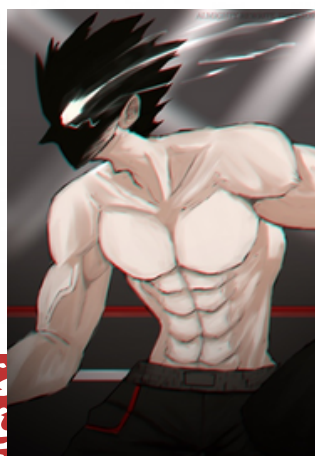
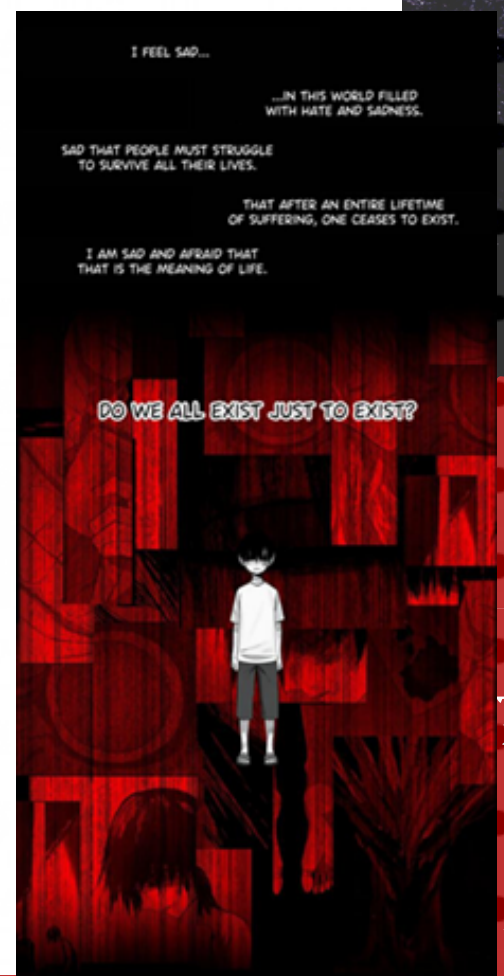
## Action:

### “The Boxer” reviewed by Linh Chi

Summary: (completed - 104 episodes, 123 episodes including spin-offs)  
The main character in this story, Yu, is similar to a villain, he's inhumane and robotic.

Yu has suffered from an existential crisis from a young age with a traumatic past, causing the 17-year-old to become numb and dissociated from reality no longer being able to fit in the community. Yu possesses exceptional talent to dodge punches with god gifted agility but he prefers getting beaten up as he finds no meaning in his life. K, an old boxing trainer, took Yu under him and Yu thrived with extraordinary speed with his inhumane talent for boxing.

Some of the characters in ‘The boxer’ are psychos. e.g Yu our protagonist and coach K..., which would become a dilemma in the future matches and more obviously shown.





The cast of the series is really good, all feeling very deliberate and intentionally necessary to this story as every character serves a purpose. Even if some characters begin as really basic archetypes, what the author does is amazingly develop them into tridimensional characters across fights and boxing matches. The art is charming and really unique which can be a breath of fresh air for some, but it is not the best or most polished out there. However the action is definitely up there with a handful of bloody battles, infatuating expressions and diverse fighting styles.

It is a realistically told narrative that makes an effort to establish thoughts about life: human motivations, and what it means to wish to live. It goes to areas you may not anticipate from a boxing-themed manhwa, focusing on not just Yu's matches, but also the stories of Coach K, world champion Aaron, and many, many more. It is a human-interest story. While the plot can come off as a little forced at times (even breaching the fourth wall at moments), it is nicely put-together and well-paced, with a stunning climax that ties everything together.

It is a heavy storyline, so if you're looking for something lighthearted, I wouldn't recommend it.

All I can say is that I thoroughly loved reading this manhwa and believe it is a brilliant and cool use of his medium that is well worth your time to read. The theme of meaning of life is persistent, and it is not simply a boxing narrative, but a story about life and its obstacles. Many perceptions: both pessimistic and optimistic sides in life is previewed in 'The Boxer' through the sublime characters.

Overall, "The Boxer" is a more philosophical action series with occasional religious overtones.

However, if you are looking for a more realistic boxing webtoon/manhwa/manga to read try a classic one "ippo Hajime" (a manga); one of my definite favourites. It is realistic however, is not perfect plot-wise as it is repetitive. Other recommendations include: "Weak Hero"; "Ashita no Joe", all of which are good reads. "Weak Hero" is also a similar webtoon to "The Boxer" but the main character is distinctive and uncommon, unlike other action archetypes with overpowered protagonists, weak hero depict a student with weaker brutal strength, someone who uses his intelligence to fight instead.

## Fantasy:

### “I Want to be You for a Day” reviewed by Ashley

Summary: (ongoing)

The story follows Medea Solon and Psyche Callista as they find themselves switching bodies with each other. This had all started when Medea, who was supposed to be crowned princess, finds out that her position had been unknowingly taken away by Psyche. After switching bodies, they find themselves understanding each other's lives while trying to deceive their acquaintances, surviving as an identity that does not belong to them.





“I Want to be You for a Day”, or more commonly known as “Your Throne” on webtoon is a manhwa filled with fantasy, romantic affairs, and politics. Yes, you saw that right: politics. But unlike the complex and often dull politics of the real world, the politics here are so enthralling yet actually easy to understand.

Medea Solon, one of the protagonists of the story, is known as a devil in the Vasilios empire for her villainess-like actions and terrible personality, but in truth she is one of the most manipulative, cunning people in the whole of the empire. She uses the people around her, controlling the crowd and people the way she wants to. But why would she make herself seem bad if she’s such an intelligent person? Well, think of it this way: if the people around you only see you as merely a spoiled noble who cannot do anything without the help of a servant, everyone is going to underestimate you. You can take advantage of the people who do not expect much from you and manipulate them without them even suspecting it. At first, she seems like a cruel, tyrannical lady who was pampered and spoiled too much within her household, the villainess in every typical fantasy story, and though in a way, it is true, not everything is as straightforward as it seems.

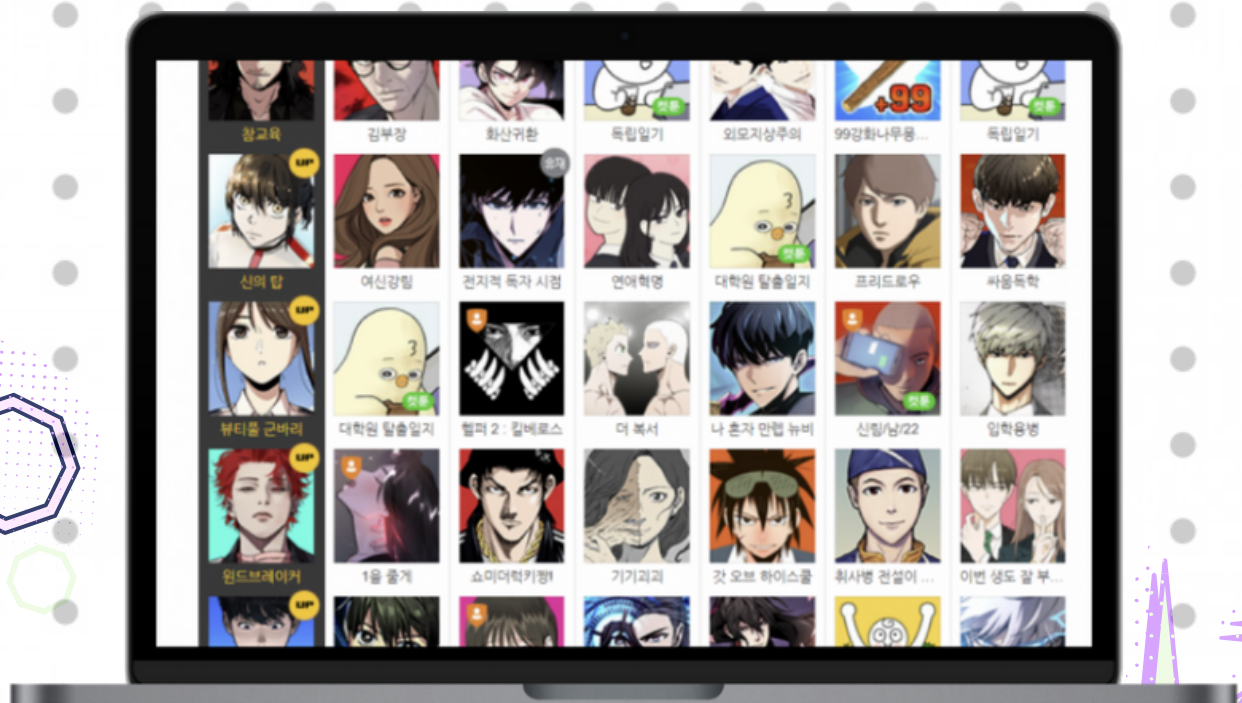
Enter Psyche Callista, the second protagonist of this manhwa. At first, she seems like the typical love interest in a fantasy story: a soft and timid personality, loved by the citizens, an angelic-like appearance, and in all honesty, that is not so far from the truth. She is naïve and easily manipulated by others and of course, she even has holy magical healing powers. What more of a pretty perfect Mary Sue could you possibly ask for? Except for the fact that she is absolutely not a Mary Sue. The more that the story progresses, the more you will find her growing to be independent, learning for herself, and finally understanding her worth. The character development in this plot truly is awe-inspiring.

As Medea and Psyche interact, you will see so much of their development and personality. You can tell how much time and dedication the author has spent on just building the characters and how they react to the world and situations around them, especially when this pair interacts with each other. The contrast between them is so vast that you would wonder how they even get along with each other: good and evil, day and night, even the character designs contrast each other. But the way they talk to each other after finally getting to know each other is so adorable and just refreshing to see amidst the politics.

Though after reading this, you might even question how there are any politics in the first place. Well, let's just say the social hierarchy, dispute between the nobles or even commoners, and especially manipulation all make up a factor of it. Of course, our beloved main characters of this story will all take the brunt of it.

### Final Takeaway:

In general, if you usually favour reading with minimal words and stunning, spectacular art, we hope that this phenomenal illustration plus depiction encourages you in some way when choosing a new manhwa to read. Unquestionably you ought to attempt to read manhwa while you are looking for inspiration for drawings or to unwind from a long tiring day. Make sure you don't miss this sign and actually participate in creative activities!





The background of the slide is a dark, atmospheric photograph of a dollhouse interior. In the center, a doll with a pale, mask-like face and dark hair is visible, standing in a dimly lit room. The room features ornate wallpaper and classical columns. The overall mood is eerie and unsettling, fitting the theme of psychological horror.

# Psychological Horror: What Causes It?

Written by Xinyue Wang, Y11

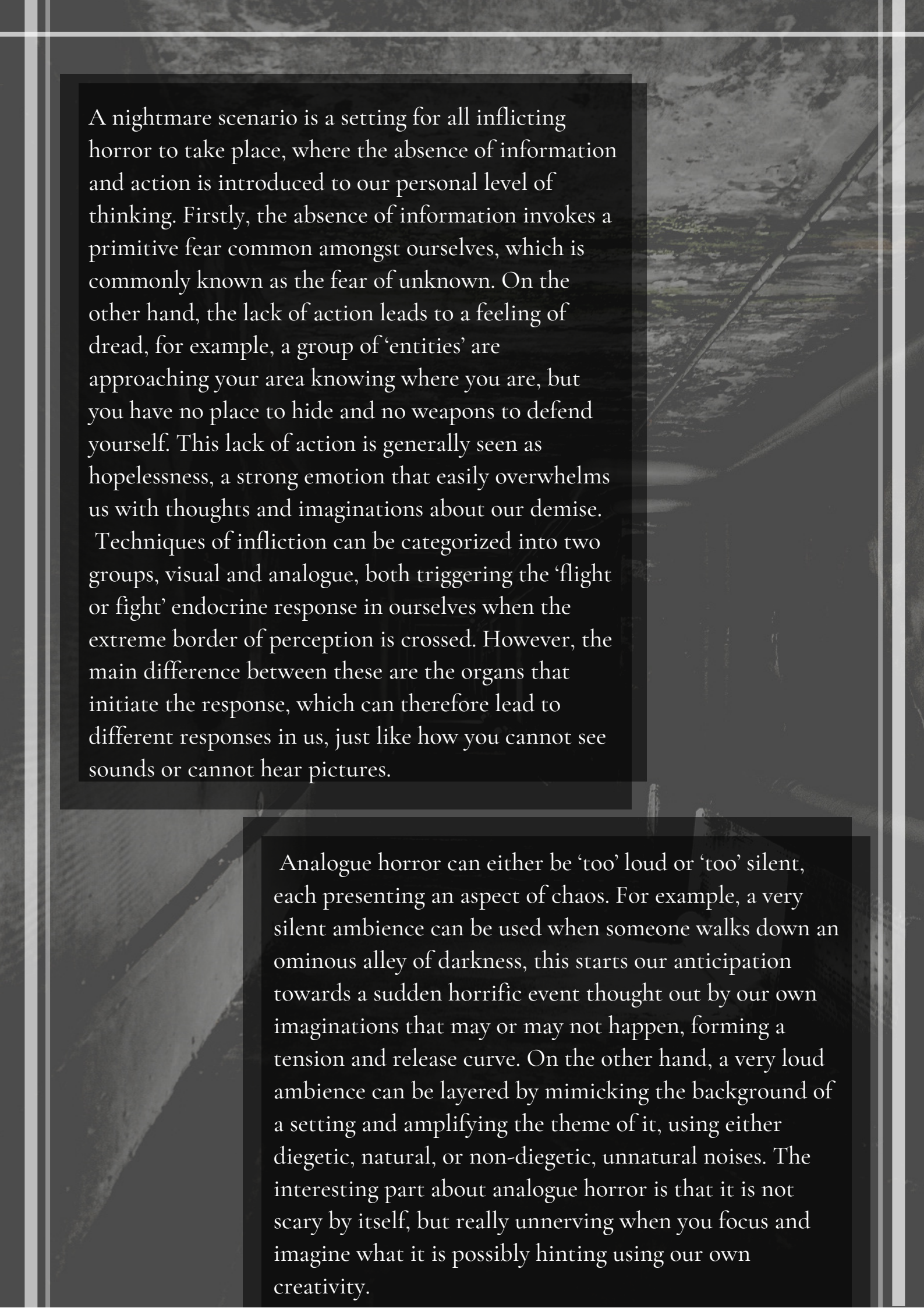
Designed by Yeonju (Rebecca) Yi, Y11

Psychological Horror, how is it created?

Is it what you see? Or what you hear? It is neither. What is psychological horror then? Is it caused by the fear of your own imagination and creativity? Well, possibly. Psychological horror is a category of human fear that does not involve sudden surprises like jump scares, but instead, a slow and gradual paving of atmosphere to send long lasting chills down your spine. The question of “Is it real?”, rings a bell in our mind, leaving a strong and lasting impact on us. Psychological horror is established using the basis of our creativity, along with the perspective of human minds towards familiar settings in a nightmare scenario.

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A nightmare scenario is a setting for all inflicting horror to take place, where the absence of information and action is introduced to our personal level of thinking. Firstly, the absence of information invokes a primitive fear common amongst ourselves, which is commonly known as the fear of unknown. On the other hand, the lack of action leads to a feeling of dread, for example, a group of 'entities' are approaching your area knowing where you are, but you have no place to hide and no weapons to defend yourself. This lack of action is generally seen as hopelessness, a strong emotion that easily overwhelms us with thoughts and imaginations about our demise.

Techniques of infliction can be categorized into two groups, visual and analogue, both triggering the 'flight or fight' endocrine response in ourselves when the extreme border of perception is crossed. However, the main difference between these are the organs that initiate the response, which can therefore lead to different responses in us, just like how you cannot see sounds or cannot hear pictures.

Analogue horror can either be 'too' loud or 'too' silent, each presenting an aspect of chaos. For example, a very silent ambience can be used when someone walks down an ominous alley of darkness, this starts our anticipation towards a sudden horrific event thought out by our own imaginations that may or may not happen, forming a tension and release curve. On the other hand, a very loud ambience can be layered by mimicking the background of a setting and amplifying the theme of it, using either diegetic, natural, or non-diegetic, unnatural noises. The interesting part about analogue horror is that it is not scary by itself, but really unnerving when you focus and imagine what it is possibly hinting using our own creativity.



Visual horror in the category of psychological horror does not include jump scares, but is more focused on the environment around the viewer. The absence or presence of a specific object or creature creates uneasiness. These are usually situated in the uncanny valley, the area of perception lying between the unnatural and the normal perspectives of our experiences. The most common instance includes a kid's playground; A playground is often associated with "cheerful" and "bright", and not something "eerie" or "dark". A playground with such 'abnormal' characteristics would be considered as a horror setting, as it is between a familiar normal place, and a 'twisted' nightmare fuel.

A great example that combines these two techniques is 'Backrooms', a fan-made documentation of a fictional endless maze. Visually, the main backroom is made up of moist carpets and monochromatic yellow



wallpaper. An endless empty room with frequent wall blockage generates a sense of mundane horror, as we never know what 'entities' are behind it. The 'entities' also use the uncanny valley for its design, as they are often disfigured humanoid creatures that roam around, constantly hunting for blood. Other than the 'off' feeling of the setting, loud ambience in the background with constant buzzing ceiling lights interfere with information gathering, meaning that the presence of danger will be sudden. Once the idea of insecurity develops in our minds, we drive ourselves to insanity rather quickly.

So why does your own creativity have an influence on how we perceive horror? The fear of unknown makes us imagine all the different outcomes of death in order to protect ourselves. But often when something is unclear, or just a brief description, our minds come in to assume what happens next. This is what all text-based horror is based on, for example: “I saw something break into my house through the cameras”, “but I never saw it leave”. These are the basic foundations of a ‘creepypasta’ and the appearance of whatever you imagine originates from your own deep fear.

It is not what you see, what you hear, nor what you read, it is all about your imagination.

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# Perhaps the Most Creative Shooting Technique:

# **STOP MOTION**

Written by Taeyeon Kwun, Y10

Designed by Jiwon Kang, Y9

## What is a 'Stop motion'?

If we go back to the start of the animation, we will arrive at a technique called "stop motion". Stop motion is a type of animation and a technique for making videos. It uses real objects rather than drawings or digital images to tell the story. The character of the stop motion can be anything, can also be people, animals, and everyday items. It can also be made from clay or paper. To explain the stop motion technique simply, place the object at the desired position, move the object little by little, take pictures and attach them. If you play back these pictures, you can create an effect that makes the characters look like they are moving.

Did you know that creating animation by splicing these small frames together is the oldest film style?

The history of stop motion can be explained almost as the history of cinema itself. The first stop-motion film released to the world was The Humpty Dumpty Circus, made in 1989. The animation is said to contain a short simulation of a circus action using a puppet. Unfortunately, there are currently no parts or restored versions of this film to be found. Considering that the world's first commercial film was screened in 1895, it is not an exaggeration to say that stop motion contains the entire history of cinema.

Although it is a technique that is not used well after CG is developed. This is because CG is simpler, more reusable, and more realistic than stop motion, which requires more time and effort. Not only in animation, but also in commercials. In Korea, until the early 90s, it was a technique commonly seen in advertisement videos as a directing technique with analog sensibility along with hand animation.



## So, what makes stop motion so attractive and creative?

First of all, just by watching a stop-motion movie, we can feel the effort and hard work of the producers. The reason why I think stop motion is creative and unique is the sense of heterogeneity that appears in the technique of shooting frame by frame. I think that different movements in a slightly different background are the only sensibility of stop motion, rather than the natural movements we usually see in the background of our daily lives. Another point is that the creator's personality and characteristics can be freely displayed. If you ask another person to make one stop motion the same, you can imitate it, but the feeling it gives is different. The number of frames per movement, the angle of the object, lighting, etc.



All elements that make up the stop motion depend on the choice of the creator. On the other hand, in the case of 3D, you can make the same thing as long as you have data. That's why artists use stop motion to create works with their own individuality. This is one of the reasons why stop motion has been maintained to this day, hundreds of years later. Just as there are people, who are looking for a nostalgic mood like retro or analog.

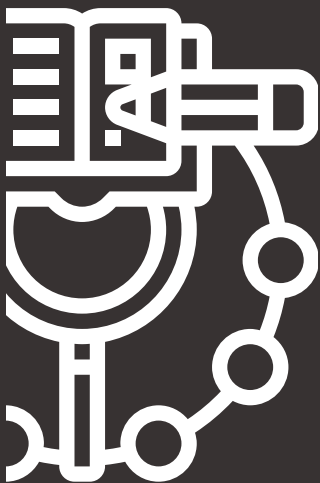


# RACE TO HUMAN EQUIVALENCE IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

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Written by Vu Hieu Minh To, Y13

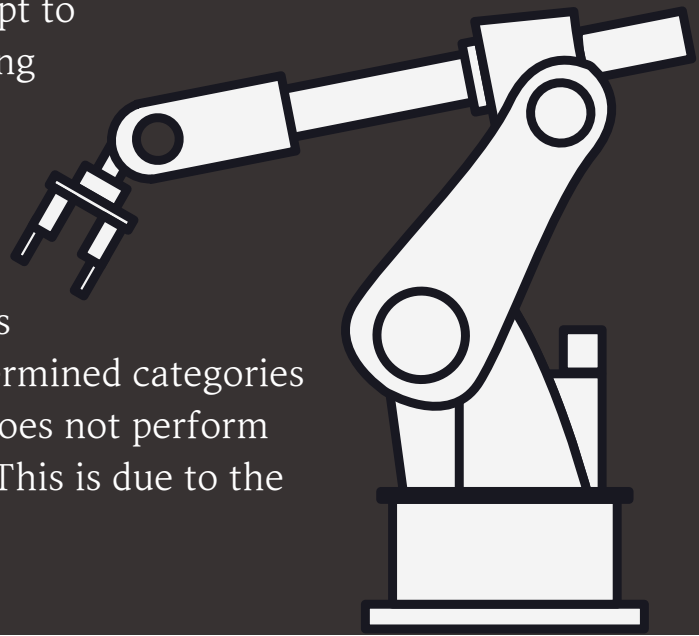
Designed by Hojeong Choi, Y12



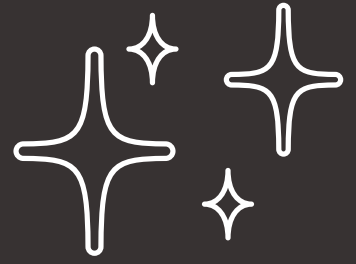
This article summarizes two books – “Rebooting AI: Building Artificial Intelligence We Can Trust” and “A Human’s Guide To Machine Intelligence” – with opposing stances about whether to pursue genuine artificial intelligence (AI) or not and examples of ongoing research to approach genuine AI and improve practical systems.

The majority of us have heard about the term “AI” before, but to define it, AI is a computer’s ability to perform cognitively similar to a human including learning and decision-making. Machine learning is a field within AI which refers to a process in which data is integrated into a system and therefore, incorporated mathematical models allow the system to draw conclusions and learn on its own (Microsoft.com, 2022).

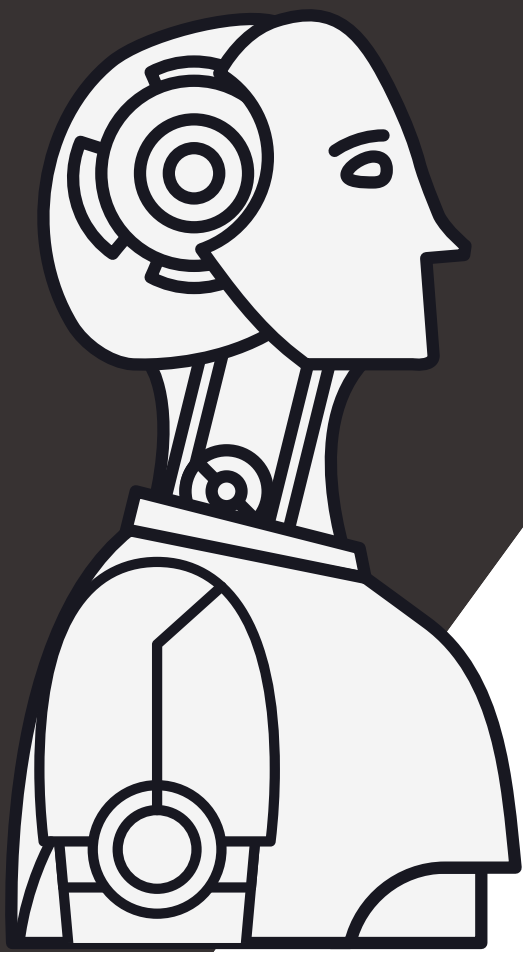
In the book “Rebooting AI: Building Artificial Intelligence We Can Trust” written by two co-authors Ernest Davis and Gary Marcus, the main points that they mentioned include analyses of current mistakes scientists are making in the research of AI and methods we can adopt to solve them, or at least help us in approaching genuine intelligence. For instance, machine learning such as deep learning, which makes use of artificial neural networks (constructed similar to neurons of a human brain that find patterns from images to produce an output according to pre-determined categories set by programmers) to understand data, does not perform the level of robustness it should be doing. This is due to the



fact that the word “deep” only refers to the number of layers of neural network, however, it does not mean the extent to which the system comprehends the data. As a result, although in vast applications deep learning is able to demonstrate image recognition and categorize at high accuracies, the system does not intricately understand data like humans.



One of the cases can be seen in the Stanford Question Answering Dataset where the program is tested on its ability to read based on a given simple passage. The questions within the dataset are rather straightforward: who does what or what happens to that person. The program successfully provides answers to these questions. However, these answers are derived by highlighting specific parts of the answers, therefore, when asked by more complex questions where the program has to link one event to another, or in other words make inferences, it fails to do so. The author then concludes that the program does not truly mimic humans' intelligence but instead scans through data handed to it. Consequently, Davis and Marcus pointed out that there should be a greater focus in feature engineering – the addition, combination of appropriate data, and deletion of irrelevant data (Domino, 2022).



Another debate that arises from building a system with sophisticated artificial intelligence is whether to incorporate more of the ‘nature’ or the ‘nurture’ component. These are two terms that come from behavioural epigenetics of humans: the genetics of a person versus the environment he/she is placed in (often observed and analysed in twins). The authors from both books with opposing stances emphasized the importance of integrating both components at the same extent. This means that the system should be taught enough, such as how to comprehend information and data and make logical decisions, and at the same





time should be able to respond and adapt to the environment it is placed in i.e. contextually comprehend information and make decisions based on pre-programmed or taught knowledge. For example, a self-driving car should be able to distinguish between a day when the road is packed with traffic and when it is not to decide the car's average speed and amongst other important factors that determine the safety of a drive.

Henceforward, this would allow the system to have a specific framework that abides by the rules of the programmers or a universal one like Issac Asimov's Laws of Robotics which states the following:

"A robot may not injure a human being, or through inaction, allow a human to come to harm.

A robot must obey the orders given to it by human beings, except where such orders would conflict with the First Law.

A robot must protect its own existence as long as such protection does not conflict with the First or Second Law."

while functioning flexibly and independently without human intervention every now and then.

According to the First Law, it is crucial for the robots to ensure that it does not put humans in the position where they must be cautious of a robot's presence and/or actions. More importantly, robots should not make decisions that would cause harm to humans in any way. While this First Law is reasonable as one's safety should be the priority of a robot, it could be said that it would be a lot more complicated when multiple individuals are involved as one of the parties could be harmed when the robot tries to protect another. This will concern the programmer's morals and hence the machine's in which it will have to make a decision that will very likely turn out to be biased. The Second Law makes sure that the robot does only what it is told to do unless the given human's command means another individual could be in harm. The Third Law ensures that robots must protect themselves and do not self-destruct as it could be expensive to do so unless it conflicts with First or Second Law.



Other methods Davis and Marcus have suggested could be put to use to approach artificial general intelligence (AGI) are argument reinforcement (the ability to revisit both successful and erroneous arguments that determine certain decision) and program verification (ensures precise functionality). Moreover, improving robustness is highlighted as a significant contributing factor to a successful program with genuine intelligence as it “has to start with building systems with a deep understanding of the world, deeper than statistics alone can provide.”

On the other hand, Wharton professor Hosanagar K. states that although he understands that AGI would make life-changing impacts in which technology will only be improved, he believes that it is more practical to improve the current technology first. Hosanagar emphasized on bringing awareness to humans about algorithms that concerned with their lives and behavior. In addition, he discussed problems that arise from practical systems in which he proposed solutions to some of them. An instance of this is adversarial machine learning, which refers to a machine that learns data that is intentionally manipulated to trip and therefore ruins the robustness and accuracy of a system. This situation is seen in our daily lives – in social media where our beliefs are

reflected in the form of echo-chambers. These echo-chambers are

things that reaffirms our existing beliefs and thereby makes us neglect other pieces of information that could be different to it, such as if you believe that one should live a certain lifestyle, your news feed will be filled with content from creators who present a similar one. In other words, these “filter bubble” prevent us from having a wide and varied knowledge of the world and hinder our exposure to different perspectives than our own (Kartik Hosanagar, 2019).

As a result, he suggested that there are a few feasible approaches recently researched across universities in the U.S that scientists who are responsible for their systems could take to achieve system transparency: at the University of Washington, they highlighted the relative importance of all the factors that drive individual decision. This means that they were able to curate a list of factors that are crucial for deriving how systems make each single decision in its complex structure; at Carnegie Mellon, they looked at hidden biases which affects the system’s decision-making skills and ultimately its final decisions; people are developing image recognition algorithms that could provide explanations about their activities.



Another factor that Hasanagar has envisioned is the extent to which humans can set boundaries for technology. For instance, the two bots created by Facebook Alice and Bob that can communicate with each other quickly developed the ability to encode English language and turn it into something only they understand. Soon after that, Facebook fixed them so that they can no longer alter the English language. However, this aspect raises the question: whether we should stop technology from performing in a quick and efficient way (in this case negotiating items) if we are not comfortable with the method they are using.

In conclusion, one could say that there are massive advantages if we were to focus on achieving AGI as it would mean that all problems related to a machine's biases, transparency and prioritess would be solved: all systems would be constructed using the hybrid model (combination of two or more models) with the right amount of hand-engineered components and self-learning ones. On the contrary, by focusing on solving issues that we currently have with practical systems should that we could be a step closer to AGI as they are similar problems but at different scopes. Consequently, whilst we are improving existing technology, we are also indirectly finding a final solution for AGI. Henceforward, whether it is the scientists' pursuit for AGI or practical systems, both are crucial to the development of technology in the foreseeable future so both research should be taken seriously at the same degree.

# RACE TO HUMAN EQUILVALENCE IN ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

# WHAT IS REAL LIVING WELL

**GEONHEE CHO**  
**Y12**

**Designed by Seojun Min Y12**

While I was learning economics at school, I had a question about the theory that the level of prosperity is the standard to determine whether countries are living well. So, I tried to answer this by reading the book Living Well. This book gave me quite a clear insight on the topic.





**First of all Living Well is a story about the Korean economy written by Korean writer Kang Soo-dol. The story starts with his account of leading the movement against high-rise apartments as a professor of business administration and head of Shinan-ri Village, Jochiwon. Through this experience, he tells interesting and convincing stories about the principles and realisation of household economies. In addition, the book clearly points out the contradictions of the Korean economy, exploring the relationship between income and happiness, the principle of scarcity, the trickle-down effect, and the market principle has been created by the money-making economy. In addition, by explaining the economy of living, the writer emphasises throughout human history, it is people that have been working directly with people to make ends meet, and this is the nature of the economy that the world should move forward with; an economy that is human-orientated. Moreover, the writer's argument presents land, labour, and currency as fictional products. He also analyses Vivienne Forrester's work.**



The most impressive part of reading this book was the chapter explaining the secrets of the banks. Banks are mainly operated on a 'partial reserve monetary system'. To illustrate it easily, it means that even if the bank only has \$1,000, it can lend \$10,000 to people by creating credit for this fictional money called electronic finance. And this type of money is lent to a company or household, bringing a high loan interest to the bank, and then the bank takes some interest off the people who deposited the money. The management principles of stocks, insurance, and all kinds of difficult-name derivatives are basically similar to banks. At the global level, it is the secret of so-called 'globalisation'; lending aid or loans to poor countries or countries in urgent monetary crisis and in return restructuring the economy to market first in favour of Western developed countries. Reading this chapter made a huge shift in my knowledge that I have believed in. According to this theory, the structure of banks is a continuation of the process of exchanging, receiving, or stealing other people's money, and when ordinary people are in trouble, banks can make huge profits such as real estate and cash, which makes the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.



So, what does Soo-dol think it means to live a good life? People often argue that a life with a lot of money is the standard for a happy life. This is being proven by the fact that many countries worldwide are hoping to become developed countries with a high GDP, similarly to countries like the United States, the United Kingdom, and Singapore. Then are the Koreans – ranked 7th in GDP – happy and satisfied with their lives? There are many countries that envy Korea for the success of K-pop and K-drama, but Korea has the world's highest suicide rate and the people's happiness index is one of the lowest in the world. This means that no matter how much economic leeway you have, it cannot be converted to the same degree of happiness. However, it is also impossible to say that money is not needed at all in our lives. Money is not the answer to life, but there are few activities around us that do not need money. From birth to death, one must spend money to live. Due to this social structure, the author's emphasis in this book is that "the rich can enjoy a better life, and the poor have to enjoy relatively considerable inconvenience" is dominating the world and we are tamed by the tendency. So, I thought all along while reading the book. "What is the real happiness in my life?", "Am I living well?" I hope readers think deeply about this question.





# Vegan Baking Recipe Book

Feature

By: Bao Anh, Gia Hien, Quang Trung, Minh Khoi

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02 Choco Brookie

03 Choco Cookie

04 Lemon Fruit Tart

05 Vietnamese Style

Yogurt





# banana choco bread

## ingredients

- 3-4 bananas
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup melted coconut oil
- 1 3/4 cup all purpose flour (flour number 8)
- 1/3 cup brown/cane sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 cup vegan chocolate chips
- Optional: 1/2 cup chopped nuts (almonds/chestnuts/macadamia /walnuts) for texture

If you use 3 bananas then add less flour

A moist and sweet no-yeast bread that contains a crunch from the nutty almonds and a hint of bitterness from chocolate chips.

## steps

- In one bowl (wet ingredients) break the ripe bananas into little pieces then mash it using a whisk/spoon/fork until it gets to a liquid consistency with little small clumps of banana.
- Add vanilla and coconut oil into the same bowl and add
- In another bowl (dry ingredients), mix the flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder and stir. Break any clumps seen.
- Add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients and mix until it is well incorporate
- Add the chocolate chips and chopped nuts if needed.
- Bake at 180°C for 45-55 minutes depending on thickness of the bread



# choco brookie

## ingredients

- 1 cup brown/cane sugar
- 1/2 cup melted coconut oil (can use unmelted vegan butter)
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup almond milk (can be substituted using 1/4 cup water)
- 1 3/4 cup all purpose flour (flour number 8)
- 1/4 cup cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/3 cup vegan chocolate chips

Dark chocolate chips are recommended if you don't want your cake to be too sweet

## steps

- In one bowl add sugar, coconut oil and stir.
- Then, in the same bowl add vanilla extract and almond milk and stir. (If you are using cold vegan butter, you should see it kind of curdle up)
- In another bowl add flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda and stir.
- Add dry ingredients into the wet ingredients and mix thoroughly.
- Once it is hard to stir and no more clumps of flour then add chocolate chips.
- Bake at 180°C for 15-20 minutes depending on thickness.

A fudgy brownie with a crackly top but has the chewiness of a cookie. Prepare your taste buds to be wowed!





# choco cookie

## ingredients

- 1/2 cup vegan butter (can use coconut oil as a substitute)
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 2/3 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup of non-dairy milk (soy/almond/walnut OR could use water instead)
- 2/3 cup vegan chocolate chips

## steps

- Preheat the oven to 180°C
- In a bowl, add butter, sugar and cream it together.
- Mix in vanilla extract
- Sift flour and cocoa powder into another bowl and add baking soda and salt.
- Mix the dry and wet ingredients by hands until it gets to a crumbly consistency
- Add milk and mix into a thick cookie dough.
- Add chocolate chips and mix.
- Roll into balls and space them evenly.
- Bake for 10 minutes in the oven at 180°C



# lemon fruit tart

## ingredients

- 400ml coconut cream
- 150g flour (can use crushed up crackers and butter)
- vegan butter
- 75g margarine
- 30g of cornstarch
- 100ml vanilla or cinnamon
- 2 lemons juice and zest
- sliced fruits

## steps

- Blend margarine and flour together with 10-15 ml of syrup. Cinnamon or vanilla optional.
- Line a springpan and bake that at 170°C for 15-20 mins.
- In a pot, mix the coconut cream with lemon juice and zest and the rest of the syrup and cornstarch.
- Mix until viscous
- Pour into springpan and put into the fridge
- Top with any fruits (e.g. caramelised apples, coconut custard,...)





# vietnamese style yogurt

## ingredients

- Vegan yogurt
  - Sugar or any kind of sweetener
  - Vanilla extract
  - 200g rice flour
  - 70ml warm water
  - coconut cream
  - coconut milk
- 
- To make the coconut cream, pour 1/3 coconut cream and 2/3 coconut milk.
  - Sweeten it to your liking
  - Brought to a simmer until reduced

## steps

- Add some vegan yogurt and sweeten it to your liking, then add a splash of vanilla extract and churn it. Either by using the salt in a bag method then into the freezer, or put into freezer and stir occasionally.
- For the boba, start with rice flour and mix 40ml warm water in. Then slowly add more warm until it stops being flour-y
- Make into strips and cut into balls then boil it until the balls start rising to the top.
- Put the boba and coconut cream onto the yogurt and enjoy!

# A Look into the Victorian Culture at the Start of the Romanticism Era



Written by Bui Gia Khanh Pham, Y10  
Designed by Hojeong Choi, Y12

The Victorian society is one whose people thrust themselves under the yoke of social code that absurdly exalts virtues and spares no room for natural emotions. The obsession with perfection and reputation turns the community into a dog and pony show — so repressive and pretentious that it eventually breaks the human psyche. There, flourishes Romanticism.

On current with the Victorian Period, the Romanticism era proceeds from The Enlightenment that occurred during the late 18th century. The Enlightenment disdains the elements of superstition and emotions and gravitates towards rational reasoning and the desire to be “enlightened” in various fields including epistemology, individual perspectives, and natural science. Indeed, this is when scientific, medical, and industrial ingenuity

reached new heights: the first railroad line, the lightbulb, the first telephone, the prominent Evolution theory by Charles Darwin. Perhaps because of such remarkable advancements that many grip onto the strict adherence to Reason.







But this fixed mold of reason eventually dehumanized people. Depicted through the distinguished novel “Frankenstein”, the aspiration transgresses the boundaries of science backfires, as the creature, assembled by pieces of corpses and brought to life, proceeds to mercilessly kill his wife. Frankenstein overexerts his mortal life, defies natural order, and hence falls into his own demise. This trope is similarly mirrored in the “Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde”, whereby the celebration of perfect reputation simultaneously denies the presence of lust, violence, and inner desires. They do not go away; they grow even stronger, all happening regularly in the dark and disguised in the name of “reputation”. A society that attempts to dismiss elements intrinsic to human beings perhaps begets even more commotion and double standards. Indeed, zooming into these molds, a Victorian woman ought to be pure, chaste, and refined, constantly expressed through the prudish dismissal of sex and the pride of knowing so little about their own bodies and childbirth. Sex is central to the lust of men and to the reproduction of women, yet sex becomes the unmentionable, reflecting the hypocrisy within a society whereby prostitution and venereal disease was all-pervading.

Romanticism holds that pure reason is insufficient to answer all questions. The essence of Romanticism rejects established orders and glorifies the spirit of individualism, imagination, and self-expression, inspired by the beauty of the natural world. Romanticism concurs during a time of vast social and political reforms, leading to authors and artists examining and exalting the struggles and passions of important historical figures.

## Romanticism Victorian Period



“The Nightmare” by Henry Fuseli was a great spark in the transition to Romanticism era for the exploration of the dark recesses of human psychology and acknowledgement of humans’ inherent desires. Dressed in a white garment, the woman embodies purity and chastity yet pitched against a mysterious and dark background, the composition seems to suggest terrifying possibilities from within and how light is unable to enter the darker realms of the human psyche.

“Le Radeau de La Méduse” (“The Raft of Medusa”, 1818-1819) by Théodore Géricault reflects the theme of shipwrecks — a powerful representation of the immeasurable, untamable and unpredictable force of nature and human attempts to combat it, mimicking the extent to which our imagination can exercise, against the repressed and regimented world of Enlightenment philosophy.





# Minimalism, Minimalist Architecture and the Erasure of Culture

Written by Ngoc Linh Nguyen, Y12

Designed by Khanh Hoa Le, Y11



WHAT IS MINIMALISM?

**A BRIEF HISTORY AND A  
LOOK IN TODAY'S WORLD**

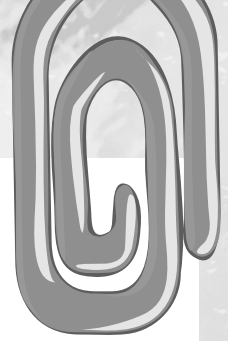
THE ART AND THE CRITICS

**A CLOSER LOOK**

THOUGHTS AND CONCLUSION



# What is minimalism?

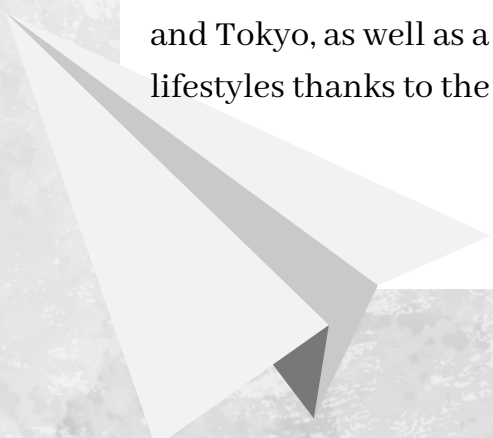


The 1960s were an era of radical changes, revolutionary ideas, and relaxation of social taboos. Hence, during its golden age, emerging amongst the land of the free was a new architecture, lifestyle; a form of abstract art - minimalism. Minimalism refers to the art of living exclusively with life essentials, eliminating what does not serve one. While minimalist architecture is typically composed of simple geometric shapes, with sleek cuts and edges, colored using neutral tones such as white, beige, or gray. However, when discussing such an extreme form of art, the simplicity of minimalism proves itself to be a double-edged sword. This piece will discuss minimalism, minimalistic architecture, and the debatable erasure of (ethnic) cultures.



## A brief history and a look in today's world

As aforementioned, minimalism was popularised during the 1960s to 1970s in the United States of America by certain groups of young artists such as abstract painter Agnes Martin, sculptor and artist Donald Judd, artist Frank Stella and more. Before its emergence in the late 1950s, there was inspiration taken from the post-World War II art movement Abstract Expressionism in the 1940s, and heavy influence from 20th century Bauhaus School based on geometric, abstract style. From the 1980s and forward, minimalism expanded tremendously with architecture implemented in large cities such as Brasilia and Tokyo, as well as a simplistic art of living increasingly integrating in our lifestyles thanks to the coverage of media.







# The art and the critics

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The vast expansion of and predilection for minimalism are largely due to its straightforward messages: Less is more.

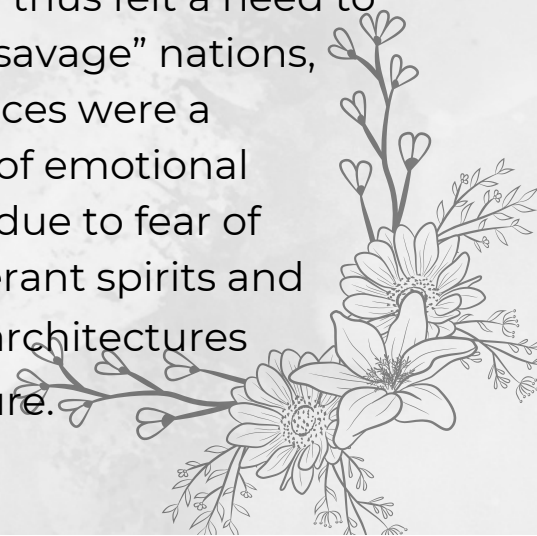
Quoted from Professor David Raskin of contemporary art, "Less is more because you strip away the familiar", opening an

opportunity to see the world without preconceptions; the purified beauty of minimalism lies in order, simplicity, and harmony, even leaving space to provoke a sense of reflection and poignant. Furthermore, it is also a rebellion force against today's majorly capitalistic, materialistic and overconsumption state of living.



On the other side of the spectrum lies arguments against minimalism. Environmentally, it encourages followers to dump unnecessary items into our overflowing landfills. Economically, it harms global economies by discouraging followers from shopping.

And morally, it is prone to stripping away joy, and furthermore, culture. When speaking of joy or happiness, we usually imagine bright and vivid colour palettes, those that are deemed childish and unprofessional, those that minimalism excludes. But, when diving deeper into the subject, aesthetic critic Johann Wolfgang von Goethe's 1810 'Theory of Colour' explains the inextricable connection behind this rejection of colourful ideas and the erasure of cultural identities. In the early days of colonialism, Europeans arriving at lands of ethnic tribes were met with "uninhibited displays of emotion" through celebrations, festivals, clothing, dancing, and all sorts of "colourful dwellings". The Western men thus felt a need to distance themselves and their worlds from those "savage" nations, whom they considered uncivilised. The consequences were a European, white-centric, white-supremist lifestyle of emotional repression and glorification of neutral colour tones due to fear of uncivilization, therefore erasing not only the exuberant spirits and cultures of ethnic colonies, but also their arts and architectures which held thousands of years of history and culture.





# A CLOSER LOOK

A prime example of culture erasure would be the colonies of Trinidad and Tobago. The island country of the southeastern West Indies is largely known for its African and Indian cultures, reflected by its large-scale carnivals, Diwali - one of the most popular festivals of Hinduism, and Hosay - a Muslim Indo-Caribbean commemoration, as well as other celebrations. Moreover, this is also the birthplace that the limbo and ethnic music styles originated from. So just imagine the pain, the suffering, and the mourning of their people when thousands of European colonists invaded the country to enslave, dehumanise and erase a nation full of colours, traditions, and cultures going back to thousands of years to then be replaced by a “civilised” and “formal” lifestyle of dull colours, minimal decorations and censorship of art. These were all characteristics of a minimalist way of living and architecture: establishing a tradition of removing and erasing. Unfortunately, the tradition, the dark side of minimalism, continues to live on in today’s world, affecting a plethora of other ethnic cultures, notably gentrifying indigenous and Indian expressions of arts and cultures.

Minimalism stemming from the intention of erasing cultures also existed in the Western world. In specific, it is crucial to look at the fascist architecture of the 20th century and its control. The style’s predecessor, the Bauhaus School was created by Walter Gropius in 1919 under the Weimar government in Germany with the visions of modernization and utopian views. The style was a design movement that focused on minimalistic design “in its practicality” with simple shapes and bold colours. However, as political instability came to rise in Germany, right-wing groups and Hitler cancelled the style as they suspected rebellion amongst Bauhaus’ liberal and socialist supporters. In turns, Adolf Hitler replaced the popularised Bauhaus with his plan of building “Germania”- a Nazi’s run utopia. His ideal vision was to build a neat, organised, rigid and perfect city with sleek cuts and minimalistic designs to symbolise order, discipline, power, solidarity, and the rejection of individuality. Although the plan failed due to Germany’s loss in World War II, it is evident Hitler wanted to use the design as a communication tool to broadcast his absolute power. Similarly, the two Italian buildings Palazzo Dei congressi and Palazzo della Civiltà Italiana built under Benito Mussolini’s dictatorship also integrated the same minimalistic, sleek, and neutral visions of fascist architecture. Moreover, Mussolini was inspired by sturdy Roman and Greek buildings that had been standing for thousands of years to build his own architecture, too, symbolic of discipline and rigidity, in hopes of conveying his total power via architecture that will stand for future generations to bow before his power.



# THOUGHTS AND CONCLUSION

By itself, minimalism encourages a simplistic state of living and the art of purified beauty. Followers of this subculture derive great pleasure from it because of the rare simplicity that the extreme form of abstract art symbolises in an over-indulgent society.

Simultaneously, its ideas of getting rid of items and colours can be interpreted as stripping away cultures and joy. Since minimalism is a form of art, it is therefore left up to individuals to interpret the style how they would like, because such a topic is never black-or-white.





October 1958

# The Ever-growing Status of Gaming: Good and Bad

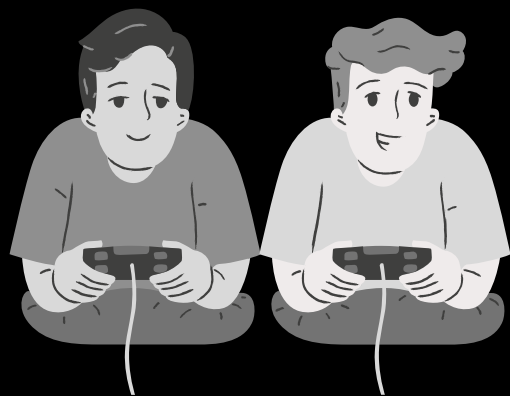
Written by An Duy Duong, Y11

Designed by Jiwon Kang, Y9

A physicist by the name of Higinbotham had drawn blueprints up. And a technician Robert Dvorak spent about two weeks building the device. His motivation? He was responsible for showing off Brookhaven National Laboratory's work. However, he thought the exhibit had been rather dull. Then, an idea formed in his head. He thought that by having interactive demonstrations, he could capture the interest of visitors. After a little debugging, the video game was ready for its debut. They called the game Tennis for Two.

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14 years later, on November 29th, 1972 – Pong was released. This is widely regarded as the first ever video game and went on to launch the video game industry. As the years went by, many more successful games hit the market, capturing the attention of millions of people across the world. This was only possible due to the lack of creative constraints and imagination of the game designers.



Right now, it's October 2022. The number of videogames that have been released so far is practically impossible to measure, though it is ranged at well over a million. This includes physical copies or digital, such as games on your mobile phones and computers. The growth is only becoming exponential as one would expect, with better technology and software versions being used to create these interactive simulations. It's no surprise to anyone on the planet that this is happening – therefore, the expectations for corporations to deliver us consumers better quality games soar. As such, there's been a record number of critical reviews and many large games of today's age are met with dissatisfied players.



However, we cannot automatically assume that this is all due to the fans having higher anticipations in the game, but we must consider the games that are being released themselves. Take, for example, Grand Theft Auto V. This action-adventure genre classified game released in 2013 is largely considered, at its time and till recent date, one of the greatest reviewed videogames of all time, as well as one of the highest selling in history. Others that make a perfect fit onto this list may include Minecraft, The Last of Us, Bioshock, Half-Life 2, Halo – you name it.

Some of you may notice a theme among these games – all of these were released within a decade or more ago, and the gaming community continues to express how these games are holding themselves up despite their age, praised for either their brilliant storytelling, graphic design or its well set-up originality. That, however, is just the tip of the iceberg. You might've heard of these games sometime in the community – God of War, Stray (the cat game), Doom Eternal, Red Dead Redemption 2, Ghost of Tsushima. Every game in that list was made during or after 2018 – only less than 4 years ago. All of which were critically acclaimed worldwide by their players for the same reasons as the majority of games mentioned beforehand. So clearly, we can see that the potential for well-manufactured video games remains up there.

However, some of you might know or still remember the incident involving Cyberpunk 2077. In the days following December 10th, 2020, millions of fans preordering the game across the world did not have a very pleasant early Christmas present. After 8 years of hyping up this, quote-on-quote, “not just a regular cyberpunk game, but the cyberpunk videogame”, advertising on billboards the size of Times Square, across public transportation, press conferences, multiple delays before its release, any person would expect this to be one of the most graphically detailed games containing an exceptional storyline for our main characters to experience, including a whole new world for millions to explore every corner of.

What they received, however, was nothing short of a disappointment.

Practically every person that was playing had experienced a game-breaking bug, which sometimes led to the game being unplayable. The fact that this was happening at a world-wide scale caused international outrage directed towards CD Projekt Red, the company that founded the game. Likely hundreds of thousands of people had requested refunds, while statistics revealed that only about 30 thousand had officially been made. Cyberpunk 2077 remains the game with one of the most catastrophic releases of all time.

Another behavior among people that I'd like to bring up is how consistent 'hate' can sustain within their minds. When a game of undesired outcome gets released, some people just can't 'get over it'. Instead, they either willingly or unwillingly trap themselves within these 'echo chambers' of detest towards what's been made. These are how 'hate trains' are formed, when a portion of the people feed themselves with bad reputational remarks from other people to constantly support their view, instead of acknowledging what others have said, which are contrasting their ideals. Even if you bring up a critically acclaimed videogame of the past or present, the chances of you talking to someone with a negative attitude towards whatever's been considered 'hot' at the time might be low, but never zero.

In the grand scheme of things, this general pattern might be spelling out bad news for the future of the industry. Since it began in 1958, it looks as if game creators fell towards a recurring cycle of greed and negligence. It used to be that developers crafted these sophisticated machines and systems for the consumers to fully enjoy, without the need for extra payments. Along with this, times were much simpler back during the dawn of gaming – people were idyllic with this recent concept of an interactable system, no matter how simple it was. Eventually, they would begin to have higher expectations of what is being delivered. With the growing technology, companies can sustain these surmounting hopes that customers will have. A wider range of distribution across the world means more people are going to play their games, essentially forcing you to improve your creations to meet the requirements for greater satisfactory reviews. This has continued to happen, but for what it's been, the task has been much more difficult to accomplish in recent years as the number of games being distributed is at its peak. With this, some will expect an influx of videogames with many micro-transactions (real-life payment within games), unfinished products, and vice versa.

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In short, what we have managed to gather from this evidence is that gaming companies very well still have the potential to increase their output of well manufactured videogames that leave most of the player base satisfied, even with the ever-rising rate of expectations of what is being delivered to them. What mainly matters though, is how loyal the corporations remain, as with how much care they present when showing off their products, which will inevitably determine their fate in the industry.



# Gloves Used in Short Track Speed Skating

Written by Sumin Ryu, Y12

Designed by Yoonji Ha, Y9

The history of innovation in sports equipment has been marked by creative leaps and risk-taking development which has ensured that sport showcases the best of human achievement. Perhaps the most impressive example is the development of gloves for short-track speed skating by Kihoon Kim.

What kind of sports equipment are there? The tools, materials, clothing, and gear used to compete in a sport vary by sport and are referred to as sports equipment or sporting goods. The tools include things like balls, nets, and safety items like helmets. Sporting goods can be used as tools to aid athletes in their performance or as protective clothing. Sports have started requiring additional protective gear to prevent injuries, hence athletic equipment has developed over time. Most of the equipment that is used by athletes is developed and is still developing by inventions. There are lots of inventions that have been produced around the world. Dimples on the surface of golf balls and rubber strings that wrap handles of tennis rackets are some examples of equipment that people developed with inventions to perform better while playing sports.



One example that helps athletes to perform better is string tension on tennis rackets. For competitive players, it might not matter much that the modern design of the handle has adjustable string tension, but it might make a significant difference while serving and volleying. For instance, the rubber band effect dictates that fewer tension results in more power. More pressure equals more control. Thus, by exerting additional force and twisting the handle, players can boost control for the follow-up volley.



Another example is golf balls that have dimples on their surface. Dimpled golf balls ranging between three hundred to five hundred of them on a golf ball.

In 1905, an English manufacturer named William Taylor registered a patent for a golf ball dimple design. Before this invention, golf balls were smooth without any dimples, but as people used them, they got marks. However, people find that balls with marks travel farther than smooth surface balls. Nowadays, it is necessary to have dimples on golf balls because they reduce the rate of air resistance.

Among these various inventions, the invention that I would like to focus on is the gloves that short track speed skaters use when they perform on the ice tracks. There are a few pieces of equipment that athletes should have when they are in races. One such piece of equipment are helmets with the numbers that the world championship or the winter Olympics organising committee give to athletes, cut-resistant gloves, cut-resistant suit, knee and shin pads, and neck guards. It is essential for short track speed skaters to wear gloves. It is to shield their hands from the sharp blades on their skates. The type of gloves that athletes wear is cut-resistant gloves. To help athletes slide around the ice, short track speed skaters' gloves contain firm plastic balls on the fingertips. This allows them to contact the ice for stability during spins. However, even though skaters wear cut-resistant gloves, they can still get cuts when they have unfortunately fallen off.





Short track speed skating is an event whose performance depends on how smoothly athletes turn the corner of the track. If they pass the curved main road at an average speed of more than 45 kilometres per hour, the angle between the body and the ice is tilted to about 30 degrees. At this moment, athletes touch the ice at the corner.

The problem is that touching the ice reduces the speed due to friction. The first person to think about the solution was Kihoon Kim, a professor at Ulsan National Institute of Science & Technology (UNIST), who was a short track speed skater in the past. According to him, he wrapped tape around his glove to solve the problem. The effect of reducing friction was less than expected. He also participated in the competition wearing latex-coated gloves. In the next competition, athletes from different countries also got the same latex-coated gloves and wore them during the races.

The invention of modern cut-resistant gloves with epoxy resin coated on the fingertips began with a coincidence. When the 1988 Calgary Winter Olympics was about to begin, Kihoon Kim applied epoxy resin to the fingertips of the gloves. Epoxy resin was used to increase the fixing power of the part of skates that covers athletes' ankles that are made up of limp material. The cut-resistant gloves with epoxy resin coated on the fingertips, allowing them to turn the corner smoothly as they reduce friction that causes between the fingertips of skaters and the ice. The cut-resistant gloves with epoxy resin coated on the fingertips of gloves which Kihoon Kim used manually are now being produced as finished products in the factory.

Kihoon Kim won gold medals in the 1,000m and 5,000m relay at the 1992 Albertville Games when the short track became an official event. Since then, the gloves have become a necessity for short-track speed skaters around the world, as Korean athletes have won many medals in short track speed skating with them.





To sum up, gloves for short-track speed skating are one of the examples among thousands of sports equipment that are used by athletes nowadays. In putting epoxy on the gloves, the curiosity of Kihoon Kim has given great outcomes for short-track skaters. Today, without these gloves, skaters will have fewer chances to win races because of the friction that they cause as they put their hands on the ice to balance while skating. Great outcomes can happen by accident and these short-track gloves are one example, invented entirely in coincidence.

This kind of coincidence happens as people innovate. The first option is not always the best when it comes to creativity, so it is necessary for people to experiment several times to find the best design, both aesthetically and functionally. These pair of gloves symbolise the best in creativity in sports equipment design; it symbolises the perseverance and effort to get the best results.



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