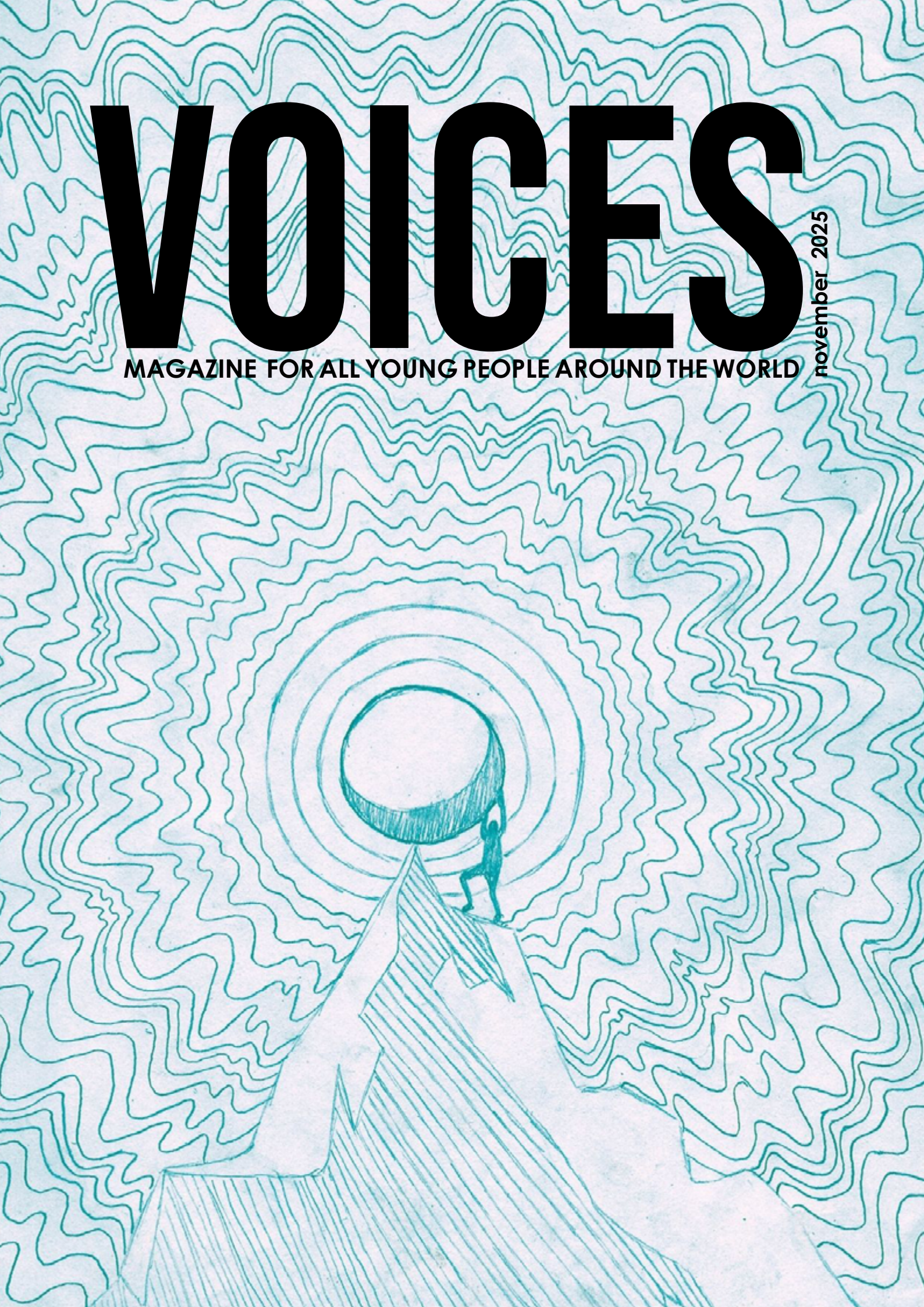


VOICES

MAGAZINE FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

november 2025





Hello and welcome to the November edition of VOICES,

This month, we sadly say goodbye to two long-term volunteers at VCS.

I'm Cassandre, also a long-termer, and watching volunteers leave is always bittersweet, especially Terry and Chloe, the last ones from when I first arrived.

In this editorial, they share their final thoughts and reflections, offering us meaningful lessons from their journeys here.

Terry: I didn't expect Macedonia and Macedonians would welcome me like this, and I can never thank them enough for that. I found a new home, a new family, and I will remember every single person I met this year, whether they were locals, Turks, Spaniards, or even the French. And every time I come back to Macedonia, I'll say „Се враќам дома“.

Chloé: I never would have expected to meet so many people from different backgrounds in only one year. From the other volunteers, to people attending events and then becoming close friends or even meeting friends of friends; and then becoming friends with them too. I created so many memories here, and that's largely thanks to them. I already cannot wait to meet them again in my future visits here, to continue sharing new moments together!

We hope you will appreciate our last thoughts in VOICES, and that it will encourage you to visit Macedonia to understand where we get our inspiration for writing.

Cassandre, Terry and Chloé

Здраво и добредојдовте во ноемвриското издание на „ВОИЕС“,

Овој месец, за жал ќе се збогуваме со двајца долгорочни волонтери во ВЦС.

Јас сум Касандра, исто така долгорочна волонтерка, и гледањето како волонтерите си заминуваат е секогаш горчливо-слатко, особено Тери и Клои, последните од времето кога првпат дојдов тука.

Во овој едиторијал, тие ги споделуваат своите последни мисли и размислувања и ни нудат значајни лекции од нивните патувања овде.

Тери: Не очекував дека Македонија и Македонците ќе ме пречекаат вака, и никогаш не можам доволно да им се заблагодарам за тоа. Најдов нов дом, ново семејство и ќе се сетам на секоја личност што ја запознав оваа година, без разлика дали беа локални жители, Турци, Шпанци, па дури и Французи. И секој пат кога ќе се вратам во Македонија, ќе кажам „I'm coming back home“.

Клои: Никогаш не очекував да сретнам толку многу луѓе од различно потекло само за една година. Од другите волонтери до луѓе кои присуствуваа на настаните, а потоа ми стануваа блиски пријатели или дури се среќават пријатели на пријатели; а потоа и со нив се станува пријател. Создадов толку многу спомени тука, а тоа е во голема мера благодарение на нив. Веќе едвај чекам повторно да ги сретнам во моите идни посети тука, за да продолжиме да споделуваме нови моменти заедно!

Се надеваме дека ќе ги цените нашите последни мисли во „ВОИЕС“ и дека тоа ќе ве охрабри да ја посетите Македонија за да разберете од каде ја црпиме нашата инспирација за пишување.

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Erasmus+

VOICES magazine is coordinated, designed and created by ESC and local volunteers with support of Erasmus+ program.

topic of the month

- 4 **Learning to love the Absurd**
Cassandre Journoud
- 18 **Како научив да го сакам апсурдот**
Касандра Журну

reportage

- 6 **When Touching Grass is Necessary**
Chloe Gaschy
- 20 **Wikiwar**
Terry Ruart
- 22 **The impact of feminism on social relationships nowadays**
Aleksandra Andonova

opinion

- 8 **Mercy Mercy Me - 50 Years of Asking What's Going On**
Dorotea Grkovikj
- 12 **Tiny, tiny world**
Lea Schwegmann

music

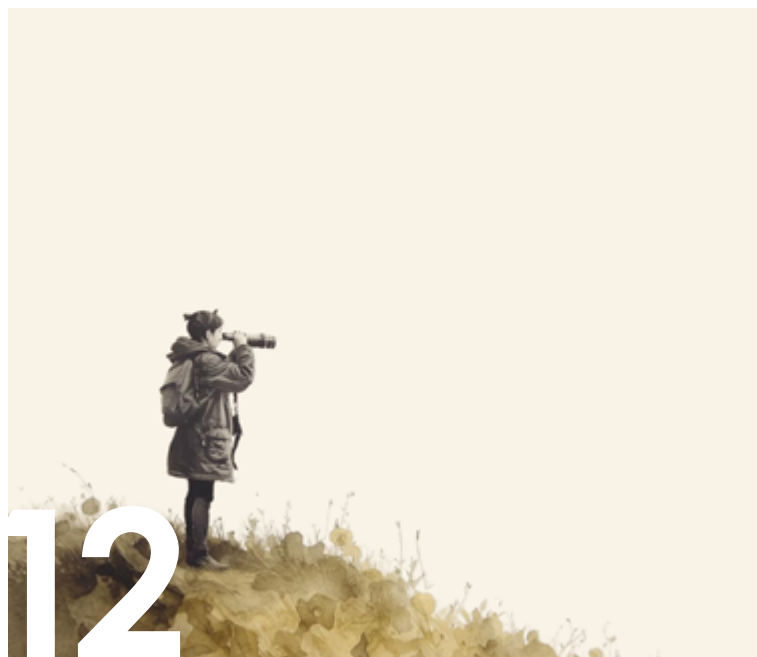
- 10 **At the heart of Mort Garson's imagination**
Luna Serrano

poetry

- 14 **The burnt keyboard**
Jona Cenameri
- 15 **Tastiera e djegur**
Jona Cenameri
- 21 **Green Embrace**
Lukáš Sabol
- 26 **As the trees are**
Lukáš Sabol

erasmus+

- 16 **Who Turns the World?**
Anastasija Gjorgjievska
- 24 **Кој го врти светот?**
Анастасија Ѓорѓиевска



LEARNING TO LOVE THE ABSURD



Philosophy

Based on "The Myth of Sisyphus"
by Albert Camus.



There are days when I wake up and everything feels heavy for no reason. The air, the noise, the thoughts. It feels like I am walking through a loop: repeating, trying, failing, repeating again. In those moments, I think of Sisyphus. The man cursed to push his stone up the mountain forever, only to watch it roll back down every single time.

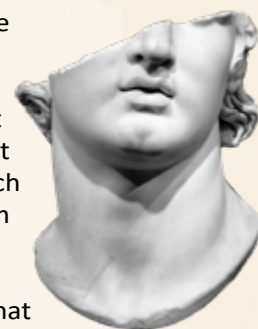
In *"The Myth of Sisyphus"*, Albert Camus wrote that we must imagine Sisyphus happy. Not because his punishment makes sense, but because he learns to live without needing it to. That single idea changed something in me. I realized that maybe the point of life isn't to find meaning, but to live even when we know there isn't one.

I've always searched for meaning. It's almost instinctive, I want to know why things happen, why people leave, why sometimes I feel too much, and other times nothing at all. I've spent years trying to build a reason for everything, as if that would protect me from the emptiness. But life doesn't follow our logic. It's unpredictable, strange, sometimes cruel, and maybe that's okay.

When I first read Camus, I didn't see philosophy, but I saw honesty. The kind that doesn't try to comfort you, but instead tells you that it's okay if the world doesn't make sense. For someone like me, who feels things deeply and searches for truth everywhere, this felt like a strange relief. The absurd is not the enemy; it is the mirror. It reflects what it means to be human: to keep walking, to keep feeling, even when everything is uncertain.

Sisyphus is a symbol of our condition. His mountain is our existence, it's the routine, the effort, the weight we all carry. His rock could be anything, for example, I feel like mine changes shape: sometimes it's anxiety, sometimes

loneliness, sometimes the weight of simply existing. But each time I push, I find a rhythm. What matters is not the stone itself but it's the act of pushing it. Each step, each breath, becomes a quiet form of resistance.



In Macedonia, I've felt that balance between chaos and calm. Some days are heavy, and others flow with simplicity. I sit in cafes, surrounded by languages I barely understand, and I realize that it doesn't matter. Life keeps happening with or without explanation. There's comfort in that. Maybe the absurd isn't about despair, but about courage. The courage to live fully, even when the universe doesn't answer back.

Sisyphus, to me, is not a tragic figure. He is human. He is all of us. He knows the stone will fall again, but he walks down the mountain with peace. Because he understands that his freedom lies not in escaping his fate, but in embracing it. That is the quiet rebellion Camus talks about: not screaming against the absurd, but smiling at it.

I think a lot about what it means to "love life," especially when life feels heavy. Maybe it's not about joy, or success, or perfection. Maybe it's about attention, about being present for what is, even when it hurts. To me, loving life means looking at the absurd and saying: "I see you, and I choose to stay". I've learned that **life doesn't need to be extraordinary to be real. It just needs to be felt.**

So when life feels meaningless again, I try to remember: the point is not to find the answer, but to keep asking the question. Life doesn't owe us meaning. But we can still make it beautiful. And perhaps, somewhere between the rising and the falling, between the silence and the laughter, we too can learn to imagine ourselves happy.

Cassandre Journoud

Sources:
Based on *"The Myth of Sisyphus"* by Albert Camus.
AI images created in Canva.



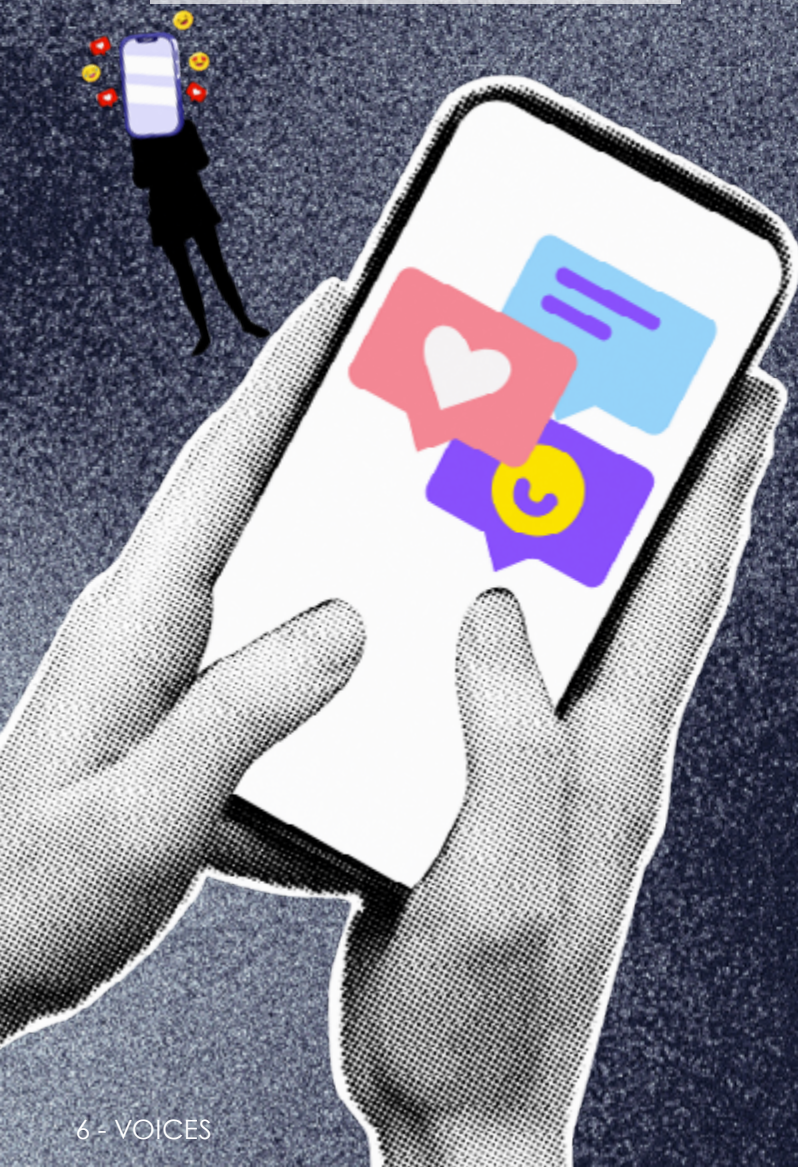
When Touching Grass Is Necessary

In this article we'll explore the problem with parasocial relationships. The Cambridge Dictionary defines parasocial as "involving or relating to a connection that someone feels between themselves and a famous person they do not know, a character in a book, film, TV series, etc., or an artificial intelligence". Some of you may feel weirded out by this definition, or even may feel confused about how someone could form such a bond with someone they don't know; which honestly I can understand. However, I'm pretty sure most of us already have been in one, me included, at least as a child. For example, things like having crushes on actors and singers, or following a celebrity's life updates on a regular basis.

So, now one might wonder why these so-called parasocial relationships are so problematic. Well, the examples I mentioned above are innocent, that is they don't have too much direct impact on the celebrities in question. However, what were mostly harmless one-sided relationships to celebrities have turned rather creepy in some cases. And that's mostly due to social media, as they reinforce the illusion of closeness with celebrities now being able to directly interact with their communities, whether it's through posts, stories, or even directly interacting with fans by answering comments. In addition to that, more and more people are now chronically online, which amplifies the effects and the intensity of said parasocial relationships, as people always hold more and more importance to what's going on online. And let's be honest, we are all in some ways responsible for this, despite doing it to different extremes.

Talking about extremes, I think it's high time to mention a fanbase that in some cases illustrate perfectly taking parasocial relationships too far, the Swifties. While I'm myself a casual listener of Taylor Swift, I have to say that the online behaviour of some of her most dedicated fans, is honestly concerning and repulsive to me. Let's take the example of the mixed reactions to the release of Swift's latest album *The Life of a Showgirl*. Only a few hours after its release I could see most people on Instagram saying that they either don't like it, or that they are disappointed. Now, the problem is not those people just stating an opinion based on their music preferences and lyrics that they find cringe, no, the main problem is how some hardcore fans are reacting to people's critics. Like people are defending Taylor Swift and her album at any cost, without being able to take criticism. But what does this have to do with parasocial relationships and also being chronically online?

Well, for me the problem is people feeling like they have to defend a celebrity no matter what over criticism on an album. While,



yeah, Taylor Swift probably appreciates having an army of dedicated fans defending her every action, is it really her fans responsibility/business to defend her every move? As Taylor Swift is a billionaire with a very good publicist, I think she can defend herself against criticism without people going insane online.

While this already may seem like people taking being a fan too far, it's unfortunately not the worst case. There are, of course, stalker cases, but there are also some worse cases. Indeed, sometimes it can lead to fans swarming private personal events. While there are probably many reports of such cases I will mention one of the most extreme examples that I know. Indeed, I think I will never forget about reading that the Dolan Twins, who were very popular YouTubers around 2018-2019, had to ask fans to not attend their dad's funeral. Yes, you read this correctly. They had to make this request after hashtags about turning the funeral into a meet up started to appear on social media.

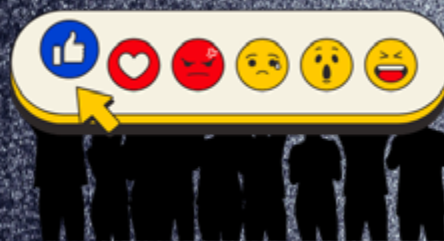
As you understand this article focused on the negative sides of parasocial relationships, however, it's worth noting that there can also be positive sides to them. The key element to keep them positive is to stay connected with real life. So, how to find the balance in parasocial relationships? Well, as some might say "touch some grass", and try to reconnect with reality. On a more serious note, it's actually really important to stay in touch with the world around you to keep your sanity to, hopefully, not end up like the extreme cases I mentioned above. How to stay grounded in reality? Well, try to prioritise your real life relations with people that actually care about you, whether it's family, friends or your partner. You can also find activities/hobbies that don't require the use of social media, like sports, crafts, reading. And most importantly, learn to maintain some kind of emotional distance with what happens on social media. All of these things should help you find balance between your online following and real life.

Chloe Gaschy



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 YouTube stars the Dolan Twins ask fans not to treat father's funeral as a meet-up



Mercy Mercy Me

50 Years of Asking What's Going On

This 1971 record by Marvin Gaye has been adored by many, including my father, who raised me with these tracks playing in the background. He always said this was the greatest album ever made, and honestly, I couldn't disagree. When I finally bought the vinyl myself in Ljubljana, in the cold winter of 2025, I hesitated far too long between Nina Simone and Marvin Gaye (how insane is that?). But the moment I carried Marvin's *What's Going On* into our home, my father's eyes lit up in a way they never had with any other record I'd brought. For his generation, this album is a time capsule. For mine, it's an inheritance.

And it's only now, being older and better able to grasp its meaning, that I understand the weight inside these songs. Marvin doesn't hide behind metaphor here — he names the violence, the despair, the poison. In

"Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)," he is direct, almost blunt: skies turning grey, oceans sick with mercury, radiation scarring the earth. He said it as plainly in 1971 as if he were reading the news headlines of 2025.

When Marvin Gaye released *What's Going On* in May of 1971, the United States, and the world were unraveling. This wasn't Motown's polished era of love songs anymore. Marvin's own brother had returned from Vietnam hollowed out by what he had seen. Cities like Detroit, his home, were collapsing under poverty, unemployment, and racial unrest. The bright fire of the Civil Rights movement had been dimmed by the assassinations of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, by state violence, and by the creeping sense that hope had slipped away. The world felt unstable, hostile, and uncertain.



And then there was the Earth itself. 1970 marked the very first Earth Day. For the first time, millions were speaking about polluted skies, poisoned rivers, oil spills, and industrial waste. Marvin heard this, absorbed it, and transformed it into something spiritual. “Mercy Mercy Me (The Ecology)” is not a protest song — it’s a lament, a hymn. He is mourning not only what humans had already done, but what he could already sense they would continue to do. But *What’s Going On* was not welcomed by the industry that made him a star. Berry Gordy, Motown’s founder, hated it. He thought Marvin had lost his mind, calling the album “too political” and even “insane.” Gordy was convinced the record would be “the biggest fiasco that ever was.” For a label built on glossy romance and easy radio singles, this was blasphemy. Marvin’s response? A threat: “Put it out, or I’ll never record for you again.” It was defiance. It was survival. And Gordy had no choice but to fold.

The details matter here. Renaldo “Obie” Benson of the Four Tops had begun writing the title song after witnessing police beating protestors at an anti-war rally in Berkeley. He wanted to phrase it as a question: What’s going on? Marvin disagreed. He cut out the question mark. For him, it wasn’t a question anymore. It was a statement — not “what is happening?” but this is what is happening. It was final.

“For the first time,” Marvin said later, “I really felt like I had something to say.” And he said it — through grief, through resistance from his label, through the risk of career suicide. He said it anyway.

And now, over fifty years later, we are still listening to him, not as a relic, but as a prophet.

We keep telling ourselves these are “modern problems,” but Marvin was mourning them fifty years ago. The only thing that changed is the language. What was once ecology is now climate crisis. What was once smog is now airborne particulates. The disasters got bigger; the words got sharper. And still the cycle repeats.

Humans love to look backwards because the past feels safer in memory than in reality. We talk about Marvin’s era as if it were braver, freer, more alive, forgetting that it was also suffocating, divided, violent, and polluted. The nostalgia blinds us. And maybe that’s human nature: to polish memory so we don’t have to confront the raw truth of repetition. Here’s the thing, even now, we hear about climate change as if it only affects polar bears on melting ice or islands sinking far from us. We treat it as a distant tragedy, someone else’s crisis, never our own. And yet, like Marvin said, “things ain’t what they used to be.” The smog is still here, the seas are still rising, and empathy, even at its best, has limits. We care only until survival distracts us again.

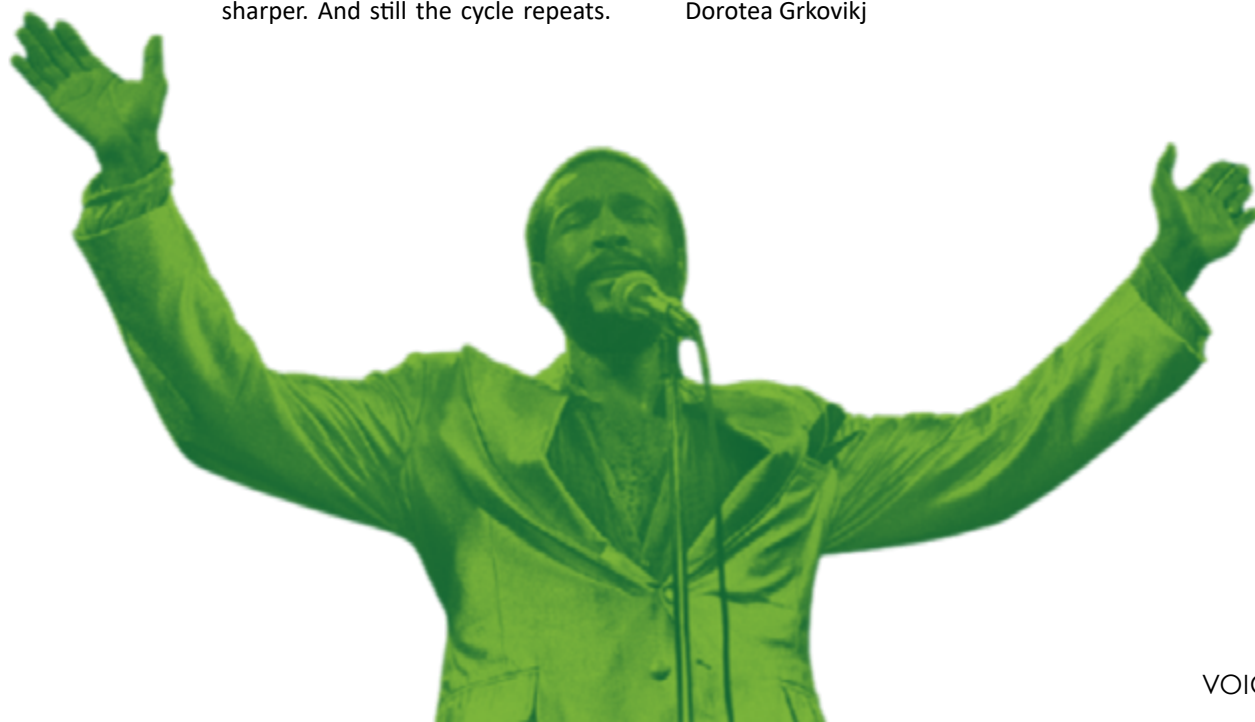
The cruelest part: the very systems we live in force us to keep our gaze narrow. Work, consume, survive. The second you look away, you risk your place in the machine. Marvin called it out in 1971. We still call it out in 2025. But calling it out isn’t the same as changing it.

And maybe that’s the tragedy — and the choice. In every generation, there are those who sing the warning and those who try to silence it. Marvin risked his career, his reputation, even his relationship with Motown to say something real. Berry Gordy tried to suppress it, terrified that the truth would ruin the machine he built.

Fifty years later, that choice hasn’t disappeared. Today, you can either be a Gaye or a Gordy. You can risk being dismissed as radical, too political, “insane,” for speaking the truth about our poisoned world. Or you can protect the system, polish the surface, and call the warnings too dangerous to release.

The irony is that Marvin’s voice still echoes, still asks us what’s going on? And the answer is: the same as before, only louder. The question now is — who will we be?

Dorotea Grkovikj



At the heart of Mort Garsons' imagination



Mort Garson, a genius composer with innovative creativity, is one of the founders of experimental electronic music. Far from the spotlight during his time, he is now considered one of the founders of electronic music as we know it today. Between odes to nature, songs for green plants and experimental compositions, this Canadian musician never ceases to amaze us.

It's 1976 and the album "Plantasia" has just been released.

We are in California and entering the post-hippie era, also called the "New Age": Following these years of openness and political engagement, the Vietnam War ends and the movement's greatest representatives, such as Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, and Jim Morrison pass away. However, some people do not want to return to their old ways. A section of the American population is rethinking their daily lives and placing ecology and personal development at the heart of their existence.

It is during this period, in 1973, that the book "The Secret Life of Plants" is published.

This experiment, written and conducted by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, explains how the authors used electrodes to gather information about plant's reactions to their environment. They concluded that plants react differently to sounds, prefer jazz and classical music, and are capable of empathy. Even if the scientific community does not fully validate the experiment, this book is based on a different outlook on the world, marking a new attitude among humans, focused on "what really matters."

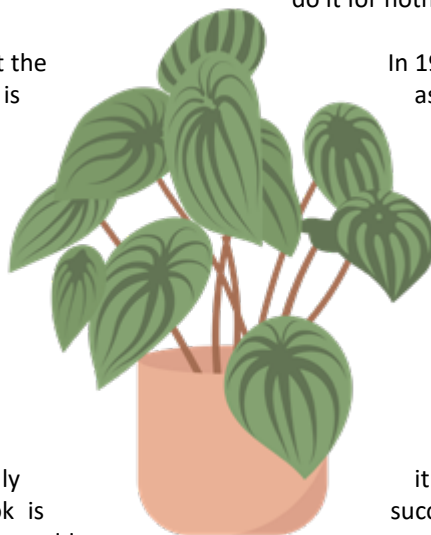
"Plantasia" was initially made for the flower shop Mother Earth Plant, in Los Angeles. The album was given after the purchase of a plant in their store, and was a way to promote the growth of green plants. The vinyl copies were not intended for commercial sale at first. It was an ode to nature, very few people at that time had the opportunity to play Mort Garson's music to their houseplants and the vinyl records were gradually given away. On the record were written the words: "Warm earth music for plants...and the people who love them." After this experience with the Californian store, Mort Garson went back to his garage and played with the treasures of his creativity once again.

From 1968 to 1971, he produced from two to three albums per year.

His sixth album, "Didn't You Hear?" was a collaboration with experimental film director Skip Sherwood. In 1970, the film was released, shown at a few universities, and some people had the chance to see it. Mort Garson was in charge of the entire

soundtrack, mixing futuristic, pop, and disturbing sounds on this album. It is a film with a mystical atmosphere that also highlights the imagination, filmed with a low-quality camera. The soundtrack of this film reflects this experimental approach, with all the music being electronic and mostly created using synthesizers. Almost all of this soundtrack is made by the sound of the Moog, Garson's favourite keyboard. He constantly reinvented music and its codes, seeking out its limits and detaching himself from the search for categorically earthly melodies.

His daughter Day Darnet, in "Mort Garson : même pas mort" (Mort Garson: not even dead), explains that her father was: "Quite simply a passionate man who dedicated his entire life to music [...] He had two studios, one at home and another in town, which allowed him to explore all the facets of what would become electronic music." There is no doubt that the composer knew how to make music, and he did not do it for nothing.



In 1969, during the launch of Apollo 11, CBS asked Morton to compose music for the broadcast of the moon landing. "Moon Journey" is the title that was produced for the occasion. With this piece, we remain in a quasi-video game universe and are taken on a trip between dreamlike strangeness and distorted sounds from the 1970s. Discovering all this, we might have thought that Garson's works were well known, but in reality, few people had access to these vinyl records, and it took nearly 50 years for the expected success to finally materialize.

Between 2010 and 2020, some people randomly discovered "Plantasia" in YouTube playlists of relaxing music, and paid attention to the artist's innovative work. Mort Garson is now considered one of the pioneers of electronic and experimental music, next to Raymond Scott. "Plantasia" is a cult work that travels through time and is part of a wave of innovative musical creations. When Day discovered people's appreciation for her father's work, she was "fascinated to see that people finally understand and appreciate this part of his musical career."

In this way, "Warm earth music for plants...and the people who love them," could also be: "Great music for green humans and their loving surroundings."

Thank you, Mr. Garson, quite simply.

Luna Serrano

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Tiny, tiny world

When growing up, my world was big

My village with one thousand inhabitants
was my world

Once a month we went to the next town
It was huge
My world was huge

New school, new worlds opened
People from other continents

But actually imagining these, seemed
impossible
My world became smaller, but my
imagination could not create a larger world

Now I'm sitting here
In a plane
Heading to Dubai
And I think, for the first time in my life, I
realize, the world is huge

I realize that you can just get on a plane and
actually see all the things you've heard of

I've seen cities we crossed tonight I could
not imagine as being actually real

All these things only exist on the screen
That people from my small village can
actually go there?

Unimaginable

Now I'm sitting here
And my world is tiny

But the world is huge



Exactly one year ago, I wrote this poem on a plane to India, where I was attending a school exchange for two weeks. It was the first time for my 17- year old self that I went on a plane, and travelled to a place so far away from everything I knew and had seen in my life before.

The way I felt in this moment is something I experience a lot while traveling and that other people can probably connect to as well.

A study in the US asked how many people one American knows by name, resulting in an average of 611 people per person. What sounds like a huge number of people, is in reality just a small drop in the vast ocean of human existence. Since most people don't wake up in a new country or place every day, most of these people probably live in the area around one's home, and will probably share at least some common ground on cultural standards and moral beliefs.

Envisioning these numbers in one's head might help to get a small imagination of the unimaginable vastness of places, people and different cultures of our earth. Of course, I had always somehow known this fact to be true. I had seen pictures and videos of places so far away from my own world and surroundings, read books describing adventures and experiences that were so different to what I had ever seen. So, in some way, I knew that all these places must exist somewhere on the same planet as I live on. But, if I am totally honest, I still could not really believe this fact.

When I entered the plane to Dubai, I had no real idea of what would be awaiting me on the other side of this journey. I certainly did not expect for the simple flight on the plane to shake my imagination of the world in such a drastic way. But, as I was sitting in my seat, listening to music and looking at the map shown on the display in front of me, this was exactly the case.

After crossing many cities of Germany and the countries nearby, to many of whom I had at least travelled for a day or two before, we entered completely unknown land for me. Alexandria turned up on the map, a city I had read so many stories about, chasing novel characters experiencing incredible adventures in the dreamy world of its library. Even though I had read all these stories, I never thought I would get to at least fly over this place one day.



As soon as we stepped out of the airport in India, this feeling became a hundred times more intense. It felt as if we had accidentally stumbled into a documentary of life on a planet far away from our earth, and I guess in some ways, this is even true. Even though we all got a little used to the new surroundings over the next two weeks, this feeling of surreality still stayed with me for our whole visit in India, and even for the first days back home, that seemed so far away from everything I had seen in the two weeks before.

When I arrived in Macedonia last week, this feeling came back again. Even though it was not as strong as I had experienced it in India, everything was so new and unknown to me. I knew that I was still in Europe, the continent I grew up in and lived all my life, but this was a very different Europe than the one I had known before. Still, I was able to recognize many things that were similar as they are at home.

To me, traveling is exactly about this feeling. Even though it can be confusing, scary and overwhelming sometimes, it is, at least to me, one of the best experiences one can have in their life. To realize, that the own tiny bubble you usually live in, is not all there is on this planet, is an incredible privilege. Whenever everything seems to be too much, too strict, too judgy, zooming out and realizing that there are so many other places, values and societies on this earth, really helps me to cope.

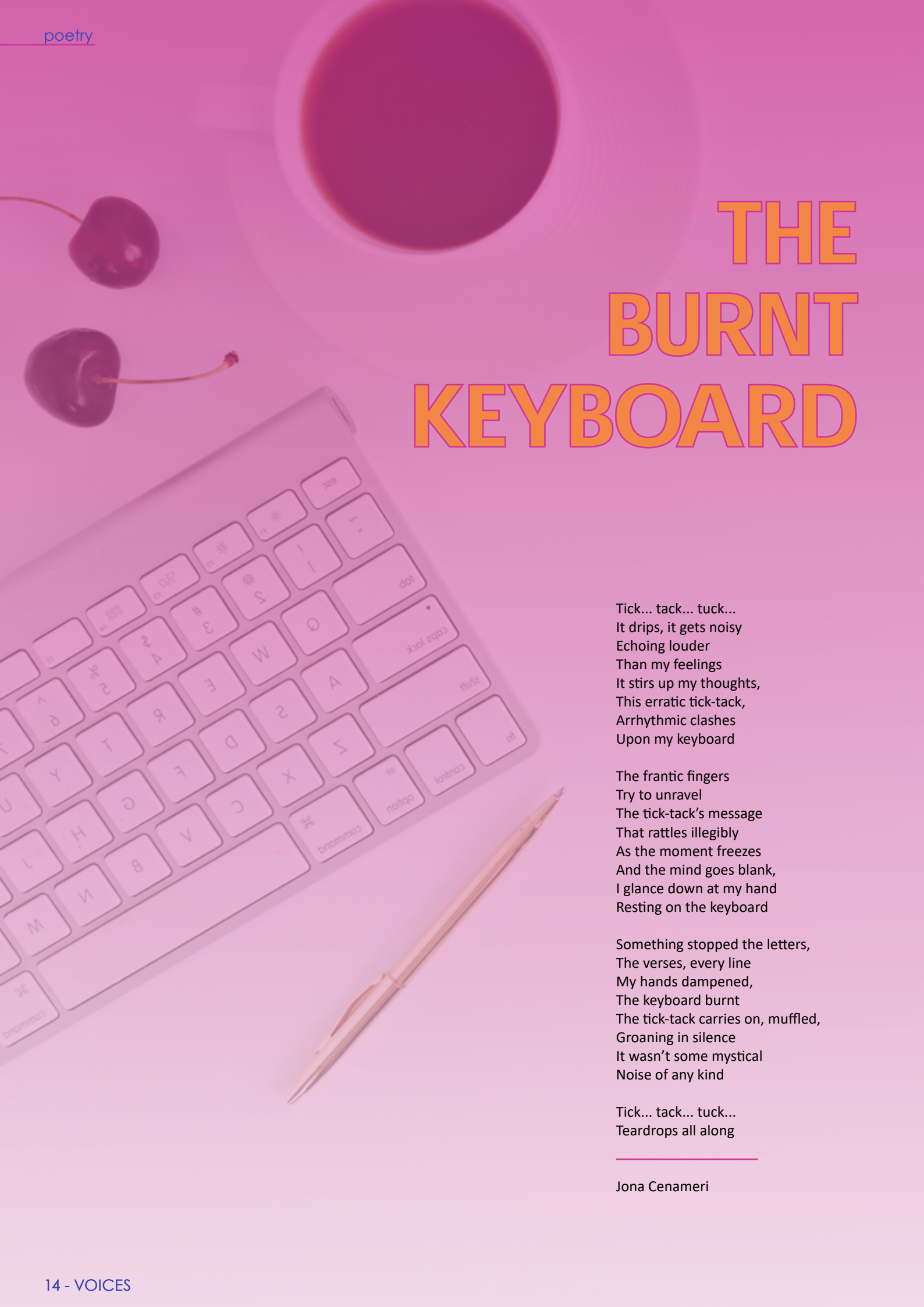
I guess that is what I try to do when everything gets too much: just think of a place you have seen or want to see, even if it is only twenty minutes away. Because people will already be thinking a little differently there, see the world in a slightly different way.

Even though our own worlds appear to be huge sometimes, they are tiny. And the world is huge.

Lea Schwegmann

Sources:

Our world in data: The limits of our personal experience and the value of statistics
Princeton. education: How Many People Do You Know?: Efficiently
Estimating Personal Network Size
AI Images created in Canva.

A cup of coffee, two cherries, and a laptop keyboard on a pink background.

THE BURNT KEYBOARD

Tick... tack... tuck...
It drips, it gets noisy
Echoing louder
Than my feelings
It stirs up my thoughts,
This erratic tick-tack,
Arrhythmic clashes
Upon my keyboard

The frantic fingers
Try to unravel
The tick-tack's message
That rattles illegibly
As the moment freezes
And the mind goes blank,
I glance down at my hand
Resting on the keyboard

Something stopped the letters,
The verses, every line
My hands dampened,
The keyboard burnt
The tick-tack carries on, muffled,
Groaning in silence
It wasn't some mystical
Noise of any kind

Tick... tack... tuck...
Teardrops all along

Jona Cenameri

TASTIERA E DJEGUR

Tik... tak... tuk...
 Pikon e bën zhurmë
 Buçet më fortë
 se ç'ndej unë
 Më trazon mendimet
 Ky tik tak i çrregullt
 Përplasje aritmike
 Mbi tastierën time

Gishtat çmendurak
 Kërkojnë ta zbërthejnë
 Mesazhin e tiktakut
 Që zhurmon i palexueshëm
 Teksa çasti ndal
 Dhe mendja hesht
 Hedh sytë nga dora
 Pushuar mbi tastierë

Diçka i ndaloi gërmat
 Vargjet me gjithë strofë
 Doçkat janë lagur
 Tastiera u dogj
 Tiktaku vazhdon mbytur
 Në heshtje rënkon
 Nuk paska qenë zhurmë
 Mistike çfarëdo

Tik... tak... tuk...
 Paskan qenë lotë

Jona Cenameri





Who Turns the World?

The world today doesn't spin on its own. Its axis is not just planetary rotation – it is youth, ideas, and the constant thirst for knowledge.

In a time when the digital has become real, and the real increasingly depends on the digital, the question “Who turns the world?” becomes a call to look in the mirror and see our role in this ongoing transformation.

Every day life proves the old saying: “Time runs, and man must chase after it.” Today, time doesn't just run – it flies, accelerated by technology and by new tools that change the way we learn, work, and even dream. Artificial intelligence is no longer a distant fantasy but our everyday companion. It enables us to solve problems faster, think more creatively, and create more efficiently. But to use it wisely, something deeply human is required – the will to learn, an open mind, and the courage to embrace challenges.

That is exactly where young people have the key role. We are the ones who must never stop learning. Not to fear the new, but to welcome it with curiosity. Just as a seed must break through hard soil to become a tree, we too must break through inertia and grow with the world.

This idea of balance and growth was especially felt in Moravec, a small village in the Czech Republic, which, with its cleanliness, greenery, and calm rhythm, reminds us that the world is beautiful precisely when it is in harmony. There, far from the city's noise, we had the chance to dive into a different reality – that of artificial intelligence.

The project “Smart Tools: Integrating AI into Erasmus+ Projects” opened new horizons for us. The applications and tools we learned about were not just technical solutions – they were bridges to the future. From simple programs that make communication easier to sophisticated systems that create content or anticipate needs, we realized that artificial intelligence is more than technology – it is the language of a new era.



“A person is as great as they are willing to learn.”

In Moravec, we understood that the future is not something that will simply arrive on its own, but something we are building today, with every step of our education and curiosity.

That is why young people are becoming increasingly aware that the world is not something that just “happens” – it is something we create. With knowledge, with work, with vision.

So, who turns the world?

Not the stars, not politicians, nor coincidences. It is turned by those who learn, those who adapt, those who see the future not as a threat, but as an opportunity.

And so, let us hold on to one thought: “A person is as great as they are willing to learn.”

We, the youth, are the ones who must keep turning the world forward – with daily growth, with courage for the new, and with constant curiosity. Because only in this way will the world truly keep turning – in the right direction.

Anastasija Gjorgjievska
for all who seek answers



КАКО НАУЧИВ ДА ГО САКАМ АПСУРДОТ



Philosophy

Врз основа на „Митот за Сизиф“
од Албер Ками.

Има денови кога се будам и сè ми изгледа тешко без причина. Воздухот, бучавата, мислите. Се чувствувам како да сум во маѓепсан круг: повторување, обид, неуспех, повторување повторно. Во тие моменти помислувам на Сизиф. Човекот проколнат да го турка својот камен по планината засекогаш, само за да го гледа како се тркала надолу секој пат.

Во „Митот за Сизиф“, Албер Ками напиша дека мора да го замислиме Сизиф среќен. Не затоа што неговата казна има смисла, туку затоа што учи да живее без потреба од неа. Таа единствена идеја промени нешто во мене. Сфатив дека можеби поентата на животот не е да се најде смисла, туку да се живее дури и кога знаеме дека нема.

Секогаш барав смисла. Тоа е речиси инстинктивно, сакам да знам зошто се случуваат работите, зошто луѓето си заминуваат, зошто понекогаш чувствувам премногу, а друг пат ништо. Поминав години обидувајќи се да изградам причина за сè, како тоа да ме заштити од празнината. Но животот не ја следи нашата логика. Тој е непредвидлив, чуден, понекогаш суров, па можеби тоа е во ред.

Кога првпат го прочитав Ками, не видов филозофија, но видов искреност. Онаа што не се обидува да ве утеши туку ви кажува дека е во ред ако светот нема смисла. За некој како мене, кој длабоко ги чувствува работите и бара вистина насекаде, ова го доживеав како чудно олеснување. Апсурдот не е непријател; тоа е огледало. Тој го одразува она што значи да се биде човек: да се продолжи понатаму, да се продолжи да се чувствува, дури и кога сè е неизвесно.

Сизиф е симбол на нашата состојба. Неговата планина е нашето постоење, тоа е рутината, напорот, тежината што сите ја носиме. Неговиот камен може да биде сè, на пример, чувствувам дека мојата ја менува формата: понекогаш е вознемиреност,

понекогаш осаменост, понекогаш тежината на едноставното постоење. Но, секој пат кога туркам, пронаоѓам ритам. Она што е важно не е самиот камен, туку чинот неговото туркање. чекор, секој здив, тивка форма на

Во Македонија, ја почувствував таа рамнотежа помеѓу хаосот и спокојството. Некои денови се тешки, а други пак, течат со едноставност. Седам во кафулиња, опкружена со јазици што едвај ги разбираам, и сфаќам дека тоа не е важно. Животот продолжува да се случува со или без објаснување. Во тоа има утеха. Можеби апсурдот не е за очајот туку за храброста. Храброста да се живее целосно дури и кога универзумот не одговара.



Сизиф, за мене, не е трагична фигура. Тој е човек. Тој е сите ние. Тој знае дека каменот повторно ќе падне, но оди по планината со мир. Затоа што разбира дека неговата слобода не

лежи во бегството од својата судбина, туку во нејзиното прифаќање. Тоа е тивкиот бунт за кој зборува Ками: да не се вреска против апсурдот, туку да му се насмејнува.

Многу размислувам за тоа што значи да се „сака животот“, особено кога животот се чувствува тежок. Можеби не станува збор за радост, или успех, или совршенство.

Можеби станува збор за внимание, за тоа да се биде присутен за она што е тука, дури и кога боли. За мене, да го сакам животот значи да го погледнеш апсурдот и да кажеш: „Те гледам и бирам да останам“. Научив дека животот не мора да биде извонреден за да биде реален. Само треба да се почувствува.

Па кога животот повторно се чувствува бесмислен, се обидувам да се сетам: поентата не е да се најде одговорот, туку постојано да се поставува прашањето. Животот не ни должи смисла. Но сепак, можеме да го направиме убав. И можеби некаде помеѓу воздигнувањето и паѓањето, помеѓу тишината и смеата, и ние можеме да научиме како да се замислуваме среќни.

Касандра Журну
Превод: Горан Галабов

Извори:
Слики од ВИ создадени во Canva.



Wikiwar


146 Languages ▼

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From VOICES, the magazine for young people

Recently, I was reading through Miss Guadeloupe's article on Wikipedia to check about the next beauty pageant, and I noticed some elements were wrong. 5 minutes later, somebody changed it. Then, the previous editor changed the content again. That made me go to check if the content is the same on Wikipedia, but in English or Spanish, and... there was the same fight again.

Have you seen the content changing on Wikipedia like this? Maybe yes, or maybe no, but this is what I want to talk about in this article.

Usually, I love going to Wikipedia and just reading a random article to develop my knowledge. I'll write Cancún, from there, I'll click on Quintana Roo, and from Quintana Roo I will go to the Caste War of Yucatán. I could spend hours on Wikipedia like this, but I never paid attention to the so-called edit wars before I came across the obvious examples. Then I started searching everywhere for past edit wars, and you will not believe what I discovered.

For instance, some articles may completely change, from one language to another. Depending on who writes or which side tells the story. If there is a war between two countries (for example, Venezuela and China), the version in English can be neutral, but the versions in Mandarin and in Spanish can be different from each other, even the opposite. One side will claim to be great, and that has done the good things, and it was the other side that has done bad. Meanwhile, the other side, portrayed in one language as "the bad guys" will say exactly the opposite: we are good, they are bad.

I went deeper and deeper into the topic. One of the longest edit wars was about yogurt. From 2003 to 2012, people were fighting about misspellings on the English Wikipedia. Can you imagine? Some British editors were fighting against the Americans, simply to have the one and only proper way to write the word yogurt. Or yoghurt. I am not sure how to write this word as well. Consensus was established in 2012 to title the article yogurt, and to note variant spellings in the article's lead sentence.



Picture to represent [Wikiwar](#)

Let me give you another edit war: a fight in the English Wikipedia (again) about the name of a Polish city, Gdańsk. Germans used to call it Danzig during the time when Poland disappeared from the world's map. There was a fight going on between Poland and Germany on how to spell it. For 3 years. They made a consensus with a vote, over 2 weeks. The decision was to use Gdańsk as the official name on Wikipedia, BUT for the period when Poland simply did not exist, starting from 1795 to 1918, the name used will be Danzig. And of course, on the German wikipedia, they use Danzig, while on the Polish wikipedia it is Gdańsk.

Here are just a few examples of wikiwars but if you are interested in the topic you can research more on your own. That's a part of Wikipedia that people might not know about, and it should be talked about more, considering that very often the information found on Wikipedia is taken for granted by many.

Terry Ruart-Toi

Sources:

Wikipedia - List of edit wars on Wikipedia

Picture: Časopis Respekt, Pavel Reisenauer, via Wikimedia Commons

GREEN EMBRACE

Was there something more to this afternoon
than to be held by the grass on the riverside?

Ask me what I see,
and I will answer by making space for you beside me
so you can watch the branches reaching for our dreams.

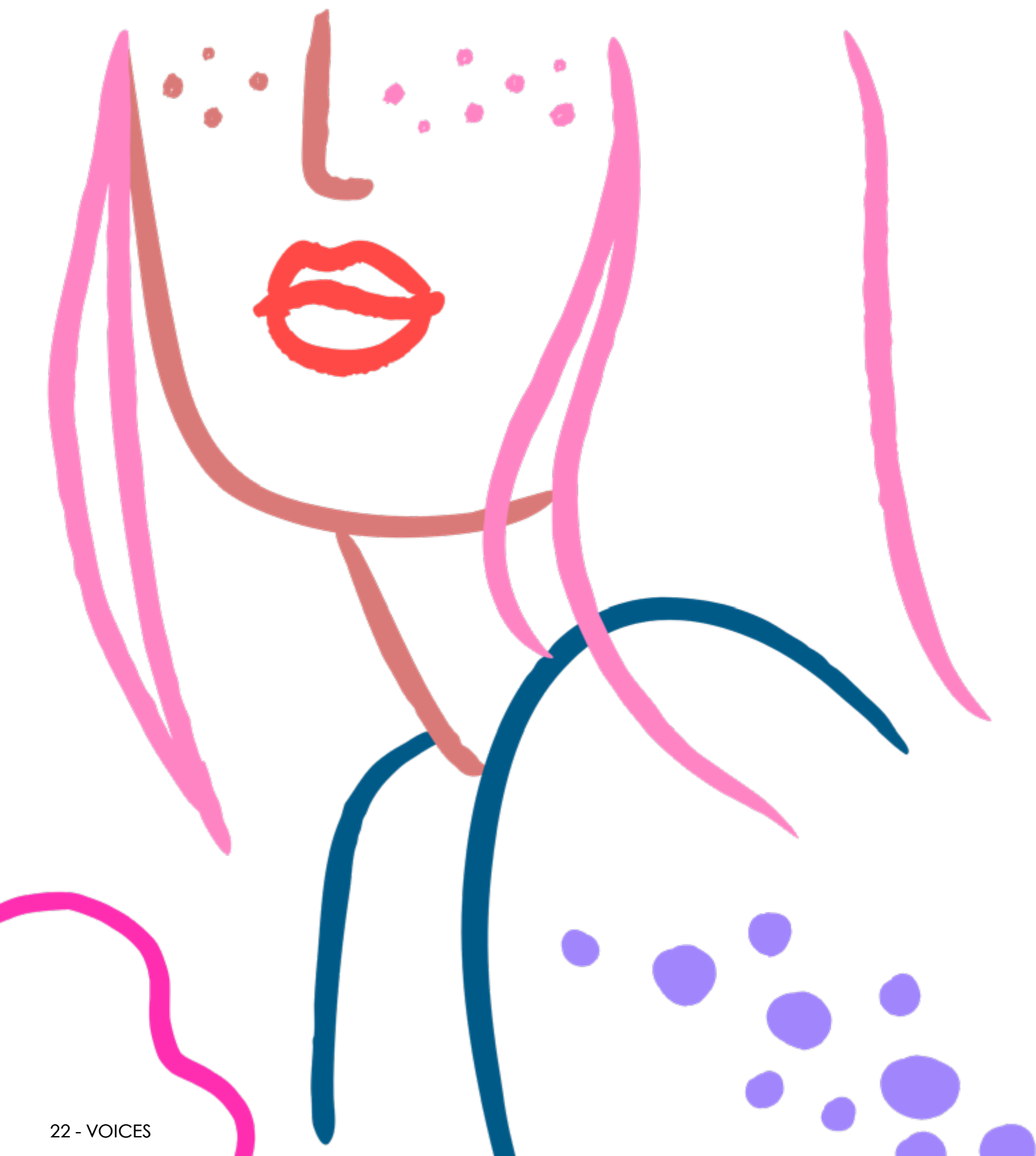
Ask me how my chest feels,
and I will tell you about the dance of dandelions in the wind
so you can run your fingers through the leaves around us.

Ask me what I hear,
and I will echo the sounds:
soft murmur of the river,
chirping of the birds,
heartbeat of a friend.

Lukáš Sabol



THE IMPACT OF **FEMINISM** ON SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS NOWADAYS



The growth of feminism in the world has clearly brought about significant changes in the law, as well as in human relationships too, as expected. For what it's worth, realistically speaking, I agree that feminism may have a negative impact, even though, in my estimation, feminism is generally completely misperceived, and it shouldn't be seen this way.

To start with, what is feminism by definition? Feminism is a social and political movement that advocates for the rights of women on the grounds of equality between the sexes. On the contrary, it is disappointingly generally misunderstood. It strives for equality of the sexes, not the superiority of women as many suppose. Feminism takes the gender roles that have been around for many years, tries to deconstruct them, and has shown progress till now. As I see it, my first argument on why there is a negative impact would be the misconception, as mentioned above. People, sometimes, without thinking and having enough information about a certain topic make conclusions and stand by them excluding the option that they may be wrong. They may judge and not listen. From my experience, my guy friends have remarked that their fear of approaching a girl is one of the reasons they don't like feminism. With the development of this movement, women have become more independent, and supposedly, that is what scares guys. They might fear that they are not seen as of big importance in women's lives, which could result in triggering their underlying insecurities.

Another argument I would like to speak of is workplaces. With the significant improvement of women in higher positions, men's dissatisfaction is also increasing. Fighting for women's rights has become synonymous with man-hating. So naturally, wanting to "steal" their job is also an assumption.

We should perceive gender on a spectrum instead of two sets of opposing ideals. But with feminism becoming a poorly interpreted word and women continuing to fight for their social improvement, men's anger is growing. The sad nature of women in higher positions is also the downward look on them, as well as the lower pay. The expectations of women are lower because of the belief that they are not able to

keep up with both work and home activities, speculating it's their "job" to do work at home. The social judgment is huge, could be from both men and women who have the belief and hold on to it leaving no space for an open mind. Regardless of the fact that there is progress in the law, excluding some countries though, humankind is keen on keeping their opinions and living in a closed box. Another issue is pregnancy, with many women fired for that exact reason. To mention that women are the ones always expected to be "the parent", not certainly said, but thought by many nonetheless, is very sorrowful and bitter. Mentioning all of this may seem untruthful and people may say that we've gone past this stage, but sadly, I stand by these statements and I believe that with little more attention these things are noticeable.

I would like to add a third argument, which is men's ignorance. Considering the achievements of feminists so far, by turning a blind eye to many countries that still struggle with giving women secondary education, men believe that feminism now is just a movement that expresses hate towards men. For instance, a guy I was dating, in our discussion about the movement, said with the identical words, "Well, you've got what you wanted, even more, so why should feminism still be a thing?" The disappointing reality is that many women in the world still struggle a lot with job opportunities, social status, and expressing themselves to the world.

On a final note, as I mentioned above, I bitterly agree that feminism has a negative impact on the community, but I also firmly maintain that, to my knowledge, the worst influence is not feminism itself, but rather the wrong interpretation.

Aleksandra Andonova

Sources:

globalmediajournal.com - Feminism: Understanding the Movement and Its Impact
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intechopen.com - Feminisms in Social Sciences

КОЈ ГО ВРТИ СВЕТОТ?

Светот денес не се врти сам од себе. Неговата Оска не е само планетарната ротација – таа е младината, идеите и постојаната жед за знаење. Во време кога дигиталното е реално, а реалното сè повеќе зависи од дигиталното, прашањето „Кој го врти светот?“ станува повик да се погледнеме во огледало и да ја видиме нашата улога во оваа постојана трансформација.

Секојдневието ни ја докажува старата народна: „Времето бега, а човекот мора да трча по него.“ Денес времето не трча, туку лета – забрзано од технологијата, од новите алатки што го менуваат начинот на кој учиме, работиме, па дури и сонуваме. Вештачката интелигенција повеќе не е далечна фантастика, туку нашата секојдневна придружничка. Таа ни овозможува побрзо да решаваме проблеми, покреативно да мислиме и поефикасно да создаваме. Но, за да ја користиме мудро, потребно е нешто многу човечко – волја за учење, отворен ум и храброст да ги прифатиме предизвиците.

Токму таму младите ја имаат клучната улога. Ние сме тие што не смееме да престанеме да учиме. Да не се плашиме од новото, туку да го прифаќаме со љубопитност. Како што семето мора да го пробие тврдото тло за да стане дрво, така и ние мора да ја пробиеме инерцијата и да растеме со светот. Таа мисла за рамнотежа и развој особено ја почувствувавме во Моравец – мало село во Чешка кое со својата чистота, зеленило и мирен ритам потсетува дека светот е убав токму кога е во хармонија. Таму, далеку од градската врева, имавме можност да се нурнеме во една поинаква реалност – онаа на вештачката интелигенција.

Проектот „**Smart Tools: Integrating AI into Erasmus+ Projects**“ ни отвори нови хоризонти. Апликациите и алатките за кои учевме не беа само технички решенија – тие беа мост кон иднината. Од едноставни програми што ја олеснуваат комуникацијата, до софистицирани системи што создаваат содржини или предвидуваат потреби, увидовме дека вештачката интелигенција е повеќе од технологија – тоа е јазикот на новата ера. Во Моравец сфативме дека иднината не е нешто што ќе дојде сама од себе, туку нешто што го градиме денес, со секој чекор на нашата едукација и љубопитност.

Токму затоа младите сè повеќе стануваат свесни дека светот не е нешто што „се случува“ – тоа е нешто што ние го креираме. Со знаење, со работа, со визија.

Па, кој го врти светот?

Не се свездите, не се политичарите, ниту пак случајностите. Го вртат оние што учат, оние што се адаптираат, оние што ја гледаат иднината не како закана, туку како можност.

И затоа, нека ни остане една мисла: „Човекот е голем онолку колку што е подготвен да учи.“

Ние, младите, сме тие што треба да го вртиме светот напред – со секојдневна надградба, со храброст за новото и со постојана љубопитност. Затоа што само така, светот навистина ќе се врти – во вистинската насока.

Анастасија Ѓорѓиевска
за сите што бараат одговори



As the trees are



Today
let me be a tree, surrounded by tall green grass.

I might be a strong oak, cornering the field
where we used to run toward the tangerine hills.

I might be an old pine, crooked above the waist,
and firm still below the ground.

I might be a patient willow, resting by the lake,
listening to the echoes of the wind.

Or I might as well be a small fir tree, or a birch.

A tree with strong roots,
nurtured and supported by the ground.

Lukáš Sabol

HOW TO WRITE ARTICLES FOR VOICES



TOPIC

- Anything, except politics or hate speech
- Think of topics that would interest **our audience** (youth)
- Maybe a **current event or trend** that you could write about?

RESEARCH

- Use **credible sources** when researching your topic
- Double-check** any information you include in your article to ensure **accuracy**
- Don't plagiarize**
- Link the sources** at the end of your article

STRUCTURE

- Use **short, attention-grabbing headline**
- Write an **introduction** at the beginning (what, who, when, why, how)
- Include **body** and **conclusion** in your article, maintain a logical flow
- Write your **full name** at the end

WRITING

- Use **clear and concise language** that your audience will understand
- Avoid** too technical terms and **hard language** unless necessary
- Be engaging** and try to make your article interesting to read

FEW RULES

- The article should be around 500 - 1000 words
- Don't** include images or illustrations in the document
- Send possible **photos separately** (with sources and assured they're **free of copyrights**)
- Edit and revise** (clarity, grammar, and spelling error)

WHAT ELSE?

- You can write in **English, Macedonian and Albanian**
- You don't need to be pro, **VOICES is open for everyone!**
- Writing to the magazine is **voluntary**
- We can provide you with a **certificate** if you become a writer for VOICES magazine





Our monthly magazine has a very simple, yet powerful, mission - to be the voice of youth. And how do we do that?

We encourage young people to take an active part in today's society through journalism and designing by giving them a platform to express themselves. VOICES is produced in Skopje, Macedonia, and published online every month and four times per year as a printed edition.

Join VOICES team!

Contact us in our social media pages or write us an e-mail. What would you be interested in doing?



Writing articles

VOICES accepts articles about anything, except politics or hate speech. Brainstorm your ideas with us and write articles once, twice, or every month!



Translating articles

VOICES is published in three languages: English, Macedonian and Albanian. If you are a native speaker or fluent in these languages, join our translation team!



Featuring your work

If you are an artist, photographer, designer or other, your work can be presented in the magazine. Send us your method of art and a short bio of yourself!




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VOICES

MAGAZINE FOR ALL YOUNG PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

november 2025



by Nelli Winzer

VOICES

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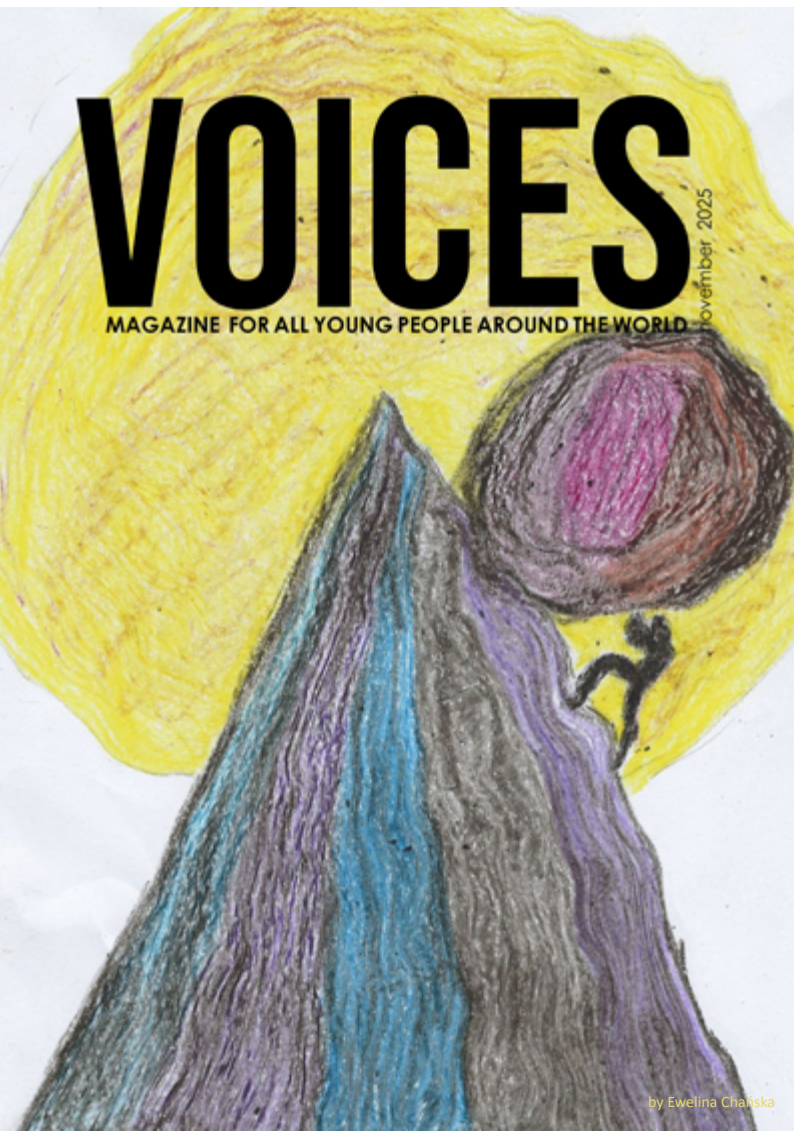


by Lea Schwegmann

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by Ewelina Chajńska

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by Arthur Bonhoure-Tolfo