

# TALON



Community College of Denver

Volume 1 Issue 1 Fall 2020

## *The Pandemic Hustle*

### **A Pentax Photographs a Pandemic**

Photo Essay By Jenna Duke

### **And the Deep River Ran On: A Profile of President Freeman**

Article By Zada Herrera

### **The Paradox of the Side Hustle**

Article By Dillon Junger

# Meet the Staff

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## Jenna Duke, Editor-in-Chief

When I was ten, I started my own newspaper called “The Brookside News.” Though its publication life was short, it revealed to me my true passions of expressing myself through writing and creativity. Reflecting back on my time as Editor-in-Chief this semester, I realized I had been missing a crucial element for my one-woman show: a team. Despite obstacles faced due to COVID-19, I’ve had the pleasure of collaborating with a team of creative, hardworking, and resilient students. Because of this, I look forward to the future and hope readers enjoy our first issue of Talon!



## Zada Herrera, Editor-in-Chief

Zada is an aspiring writer, Editor-in-Chief of the Talon, and Vice President of Communication for the PTK Honors Society. As a third-generation Latin American born in Colorado, Zada draws on her cultural background, experiences, and knowledge to guide and motivate her as she makes sense of the world. Her motto is “Knowing is half the battle”.



## CJ Fletcher, Project Manager & Designer

DESIGNER. POLYMATH. JEDI. Based out of Denver, Colorado since 2001, C.J. blends a corporate sense of style with an urban and science fiction flare to all his designs. An avid lover and participant in the theater and improvisational comedy, C.J. brings his “Yes, And…” philosophy to all his projects. He will someday own and/or fly a Tie Fighter.



## Amanda Ambrose, Creative Director & Designer

Amanda is an artist from Denver, Colorado currently pursuing a degree in Graphic Design. Her design style is typically “bold and loud”, she feels that her work should speak for itself (that way she doesn’t have to). She is excited to depart from CCD this fall with the first issue of Talon Magazine being her last hoorah with the college. “I’m so stoked to see Talon take off from here, it’s been an absolute pleasure to be a part of the first launch of the magazine and brand!” -Amanda



## Dan Schaefer, Assistant Professor of Journalism & Communication

Dr. Dan Schaefer is an assistant professor of Journalism and Communication at CCD and faculty advisor for the Talon Magazine and the Digital Storytelling Student Club. He is passionate about those genuine true stories that resonate and help us make sense of our world. As a native Michigander, Dan loves two things: fishing and stories of fishing the third coast.



## Gretchen Occhionero, Project Manager, MGD Service Learning

Gretchen has worked as a graphic designer at CCD for 27+ years. She is CCD's lead staff photographer and does freelance graphic design for non-profit organizations. This is her first year as project manager of the MDG 194/294 Service Learning Course. "Working with the student designers has been so rewarding. I'm blown away by their talent and professionalism!"

# Special Recognition

**Mariama Fofana – Editor-in-Chief, Spring 2020**

**David Jensen – Student Editorial Assistant, Spring 2020**

**Dillon Junger, Writer, Spring 2020**

**Katherine Wilson, The Printer's Devil, Spring 2020**

**Zoe Folte-Neul, The Printer's Devil, Fall 2020**

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## CCD's Journalism Program

The purpose of journalism is to see life and make sense of the world by sharing our stories. These stories find us, draw us closer, make us feel, and shape our decisions.

CCD's journalism program offers classes that will start you on this path to a career as a journalist or as a public relations professional and give you what you need to transfer to a four-year university. For more information please contact us at [journalism@ccd.edu](mailto:journalism@ccd.edu)

## MGD 194/294 Service Learning Course

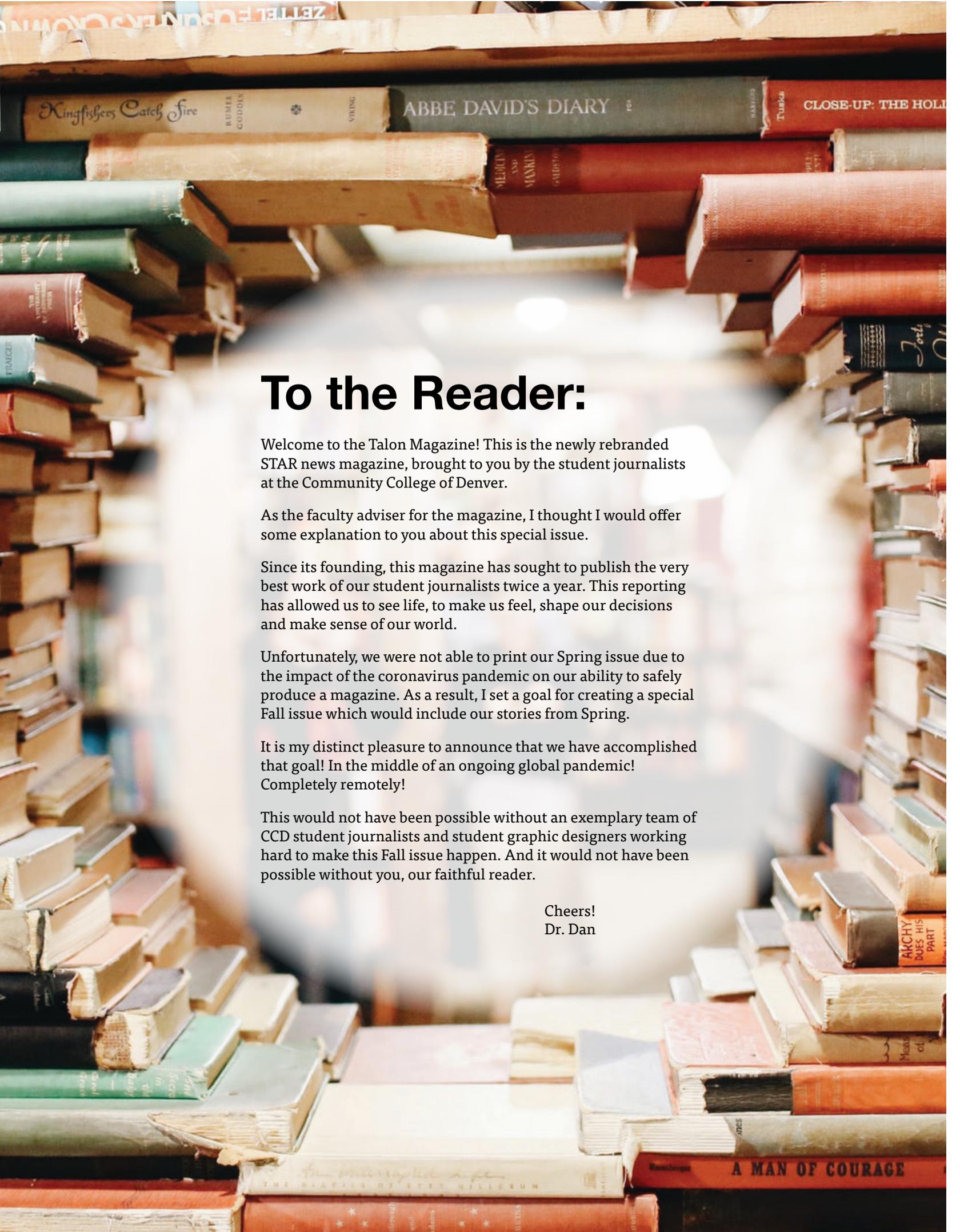
MGD 194/294 Service Learning is an experiential development course enabling the integration of graphic design competencies in a simulated business context. CCD students operate a multimedia graphic design firm to provide them with work-based learning opportunities prior to entering the job market and learn professional and business practices. This course provides a great opportunity to gain training in creative problem solving, graphic design and production by working on real life projects.

## The Talon Magazine Project

The Talon Magazine Project is an online and print magazine produced through a unique collaboration between the CCD Journalism Program and the Service Learning Graphic Design course in Fall and Spring semesters.

Each semester, Talon journalism student-contributors write feature news stories, interview and profile interesting people, report on emerging trends, and take pictures about topics that matter to CCD students on the Auraria campus. This content is then carefully edited and handed over to the Graphic Design team to layout the stories, illustrate, and design the graphic vision for the magazine.

All CCD students are encouraged to submit their journalism feature articles, photos, and illustrations for selection. If you're interested in journalism please contact us at [journalism@ccd.edu](mailto:journalism@ccd.edu) or if you're interested in graphic design contact us at [CCD.edu/GraphicDesign](mailto:CCD.edu/GraphicDesign).



# To the Reader:

Welcome to the Talon Magazine! This is the newly rebranded STAR news magazine, brought to you by the student journalists at the Community College of Denver.

As the faculty adviser for the magazine, I thought I would offer some explanation to you about this special issue.

Since its founding, this magazine has sought to publish the very best work of our student journalists twice a year. This reporting has allowed us to see life, to make us feel, shape our decisions and make sense of our world.

Unfortunately, we were not able to print our Spring issue due to the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on our ability to safely produce a magazine. As a result, I set a goal for creating a special Fall issue which would include our stories from Spring.

It is my distinct pleasure to announce that we have accomplished that goal! In the middle of an ongoing global pandemic! Completely remotely!

This would not have been possible without an exemplary team of CCD student journalists and student graphic designers working hard to make this Fall issue happen. And it would not have been possible without you, our faithful reader.

Cheers!  
Dr. Dan

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# LOOK AROUND, BUT DON'T TOUCH

by Katrina Singleton

I was disgusted, just keeping my hands to myself and sanitizing myself every time I left a store. Feeling my brain get tased at the thought of how I would have to wash everything again even after I just did before I went out. I was looking in a store, seeing as kids drew their eyes to many colorful items, as adults let their children run around the shops unsupervised, putting their hands everywhere while touching their faces and touching things again.

The anxiety was building up inside of me just thinking what would happen if I didn't because I was unaware of how everything worked. Like calculus or being trapped at an art museum, trying to comprehend what the artist was trying to convey.

My hearing wasn't focused on my surroundings, but my sight fell upon everything just perfectly. It felt like Halloween was just around the corner, and so many happy faces were searching the warehouse of Halloween decor. What looked like the only thing really putting on happy faces, even if it was through the thick fabric of the masks. The sound of mixed music filled the room as everyone walked around, picking out costumes and accessories.

"I don't know." I tell my mother after she asks who I want to dress up as this year in very echoey voice. Much like she was talking straight into an active fan. Everything I was seeing, I wanted to be home more than touching anything. Knowing how much of a germaphobe I was, I had mixed feelings. I felt the world was never going to be the same because of how I couldn't see how things really worked. How germs spread, where they were, and how often I need to defend myself.

Having the thought stain my brain at the fact no one was listening, and everyone was trying to end my life. But things perked up once I got into the spirit, ditching the many negative thoughts, placing them aside as I laid my eyes on what could be the new me. "I was trying to be Doctor Facilier." I tell my mom as we wonder the many selections of wigs, picking one up and observing how the whole costume would work and how I could really pull this off. The more we talked about it somewhat whipped my mind off the cons, bringing in the positives and smiles to my face. Reminding me I was just over thinking things the whole time, seeing the world worse than what it really has come to be.

I tend to exaggerate almost everything. Whether it's a good or bad thing. What the situation might be, but I won't know unless I see it for myself. Then the bright side starts to shimmer. Especially with Covid taking over my brain almost every second, it's hard to just brush everything off. What is happening around me, how much things are changing, and what must be done in order to prevent it before bigger events save the day, curing everything so things can be like normal. But who knows when that will be. For now, all anyone can do is wait. ■



# SEAN READS HIS

# GROOVY BOOKS

**N**ow that the Holidays are over and the year 2020 is already well on its way, the time for giving back is upon us. If you are not satisfied with the amount of goodwill you're feeling or the amount of unconditional love you receive, try volunteering as a read-a-loud person for the Denver Public Library. There, you can let your inner child run free as you read books to children of all ages. This non-paying position can be done in any area that the library serves. What it lacks financially, it more than makes up in warmth, smiles, hugs, laughter and unconditional love. The joy it brings is enough to make the job worthwhile.

Being a volunteer reader for the Denver Public Library has been a mainstay for me since leaving mainstream theater. Though my opinion carries some weight, it is one place where I am not in control. My actions are assessed by a classroom of three and four-year-olds, the teacher, Miss Jocelyn, and her assistant, Breanna. Each week, I go to the library to pick up my assigned reading. I have now added specific authors to my favorites list, including Leo Lionni, who penned more than forty award-winning children's books all by the time of his death at 89 years old.

While the oldest library dates back to the city of Alexandria, Egypt, which contained the world's greatest collection of works from scholars, kings and people of the world, the initial Royal Library was part of a palace built after Alexander the Great's death by ruler Ptolemy and his son Ptolemy II Philadelphus. It included a sprawling temple to the muses and housed many people who lived there communally.

Money was also held in common and a priest who headed the Museum was appointed by Augustus. Here, scrolls were kept on shelves under the covered walkway and in specially built niches throughout the Museum. This library became a great learning center of antiquity. Scholars would come from all over the world to study philosophy, mathematics, science, nature, art, literature and medicine.

For the enjoyment of children, we have an assortment of children's books for all ages. The library selects between four and five books per week for the children's half hour of reading time. Each read-a-loud session begins with big hellos as the children file in from their lunch and it is my job to select a song to entertain my crew and settle them down for the stories to begin. It benefits me to hear the continued instructions from the teacher because being a student at CCD, I am reminded to raise my hand when I wish to speak and not to spew out verbosely without exercising any self-control. When a child has a problem accepting instructions, they are reminded to take a break and must sit in another part of the room away from their classmates. When leaving the room for the day, I often pass by the child who is waiting for their "pardon" to be completed. I try my hardest to leave them with the feeling that I, too, have sat right where they are at and have learned the art of respecting adult figures in the world of education. One day, they will realize the benefit of the shaping and molding that happens in the classroom.

My very first year doing this kind of volunteer work was when I was transitioning out of mainstream

# by Sean McGee

theater. I invited the teachers and students to come and see *Beauty and the Beast* which was one of Phamaly's (Physically Handicapped Actors and Musical Artists League, Inc.) favored Walt Disney Productions. It was on my last day of reading to this particular group of three and four-year-olds that I happened to notice two young boys sitting in the back row. They were rolling their eyes and lifting their bodies in emulation of the highs and lows that my own voice created as I read. In an instant, I recognized that at this age, these children have no malice or guile. They were not trying to induce any kind of harmful feeling toward me, they were simply trying to act as though they were reading. Their voices had been able to master as best they could all the personification that I had given to them during my reading. For the first time in my life, I was flattered by this form of mimicry. The realization that these children had not been changed into anything but "wide-eyed optimists" was more than I could handle. They were unburdened by any type of growing pains that would, for the most part, seem automatic at later points in their lives. My form of growing pain was in selecting the song we were going to sing that day.

Alberto Pellicer is the read-a-loud super-source at the Denver Public Library (Central Branch) and he, quite frankly, can read a children's book with all the onomatopoeia, chagrin and silliness it takes to bring the children's book to life. He is both caring and personable to a fault and he takes his responsibility with astute seriousness. If there is a team that I could draw benefit from I should like it to be the Denver Public Library who is celebrating their 130th birthday this year. They welcome old and newcomers alike into the multi-floored building that houses computer labs, reference materials, great sculptures as part of its close proximity to the art museum and a complete CD/DVD collection available for consumer check-out and use.

In deciding which song is my all-time favorite, I had to first check out several DVDs in order to listen to the performers as though their very lives depended on it. The first was *Haunted Honeymoon* with Gilda Radner,

Gene Wilder, and Dom DeLuise. It holds within the confines of this wonderful comedic suspense-thriller a wonderful rendition of *Ballin-the Jack*. I also plucked *Victor/Victoria* from the shelf to hear the incomparable Julie Andrews perform the ill-fated last of her singing career since I intend to use *Le Jazz Hot* to perform at The Mental Health Center of Denver's talent show coming up on January 23, 2020. I also checked out several scripts that I will be using next spring for my continued education. Like those who lived in the ancient city of Alexandria, Egypt, I have reveled in the many tombs of reference materials; books of knowledge and learning to mysteries and historical works, and lastly, children's books. I love my volunteer work for the Denver Public Library and highly recommend it to anyone who wishes to give back from their heart. ■

Unsplash.com



# TikTok: It's more than just dancing videos

By Shania Sharleen



Wearing a sloth floating suit, she opened the camera application on her iPhone 8plus. Once she had all the proper settings on, she placed it on the dining table and pushed the record button. Without putting too much effort into it, she started lip-syncing to an audio that had already been recorded by another TikToker. Boglarka “Bogi” Virag, a thirty-year-old Hungarian woman and CCD student, discovered TikTok as a new social media platform to express her personality and creativity. While it only started as a way for her to connect with her little sister, TikTok became the “go-to” app for entertainment.

*“I wanted to connect with my little sister at first, then I stopped doing it, and heard about it again from my roommate.... I got obsessed and literally, laughing my ass off watching the videos, and then I started making my own,”* Bogi explained. TikTok is a widely popular video-sharing app that used to be called Musical.ly. According to teen vogue, this app has surpassed Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and Snapchat just a year after it was launched, with more than one billion downloads worldwide.

According to Oberlo.com, TikTok aims to *“capture and present the world’s creativity, knowledge, and precious life moments, directly from the mobile phone.”* Data on wallaroomedia.com shows that TikTok has over 1 billion users and that the app is opened by users 8 times per day on average. It is also mentioned that about 83% of TikTok users have posted at least one video, as of February 2020.

Today, Bogi has 3,912 followers and 13.4K likes on her videos. Despite the high number of followers and likes she has gathered, she does not plan on taking her TikTok experience to the professional level. She feels that becoming a professional “TikToker” would add too much pressure and take away some of the fun she has while making the videos. Since she doesn’t personally know many of her followers, she feels that she can be whoever she wants and enjoy acting and role-playing videos on TikTok.

Another big advantage of TikTok according to Bogi that it could be a great way to network depending on your field of work. She made connections with different people from different places. Another way of connecting with other people is by going live on TikTok. *“As soon as you hit a thousand followers, you can start a live stream and communicate with them. I sometimes even asked for their Snapchat or Instagram tag,”* Bogi explained. *“There are ways to make money on TikTok,”* Bogi mentioned. Although she’s still unclear on how that system works,



she mentioned that many do it by adding their Venmo account in their account bio. Some companies that sell products or people who sell services have also started to promote their products through the app. They usually do so by putting up their advertisement videos or by having well-known actresses or actors help promote through their personal TikTok accounts.

When she first discovered TikTok, Bogi thought it was an app for young people only. However, she soon realized that there are users from various age ranges. In her opinion, TikTok is heading to be the biggest social media platform.

Based on a survey done by Pew Research Center in July 2019, about 40% of TikTok users are between the ages of 10 and 19, 26.1% are between 20 and 29 years old, 10.2% are between 30 and 39, and 16.8% are between 40 and 49 years old. A survey regarding TikTok use was also conducted at the Community College of Denver. A total of 15 were asked whether they have the app downloaded on their phones. Seven of them said that they have downloaded TikTok and four out of the seven students also said that they make videos on it.

Eight students out of the 15, said that they don't have TikTok downloaded but they watch it through Instagram or the TikTok videos compilation on YouTube.

Generation Z was born with new media evolving and improving. They know a lot about new upgrades and what's 'popping.' "People want to see live videos, Instagram stories, Snapchat, and TikTok. They don't wanna sit and read captions," Bogi said. ZBogi believes that for anyone looking to make it big in the media industry, smaller platforms such as TikTok is a great place to start establishing an online presence and build an army of followers, that will also follow you when it's time for bigger platform such as YouTube or even national TV.

"I gained followers on my photography Instagram account because of TikTok. I linked my Instagram account on TikTok and people started to see my artworks," Bogi shared. For her, it is not about making money on TikTok, but it is about how you make connection, promote your profile, express yourself, and build an audience. ■

# Paradox of the Side Hustle

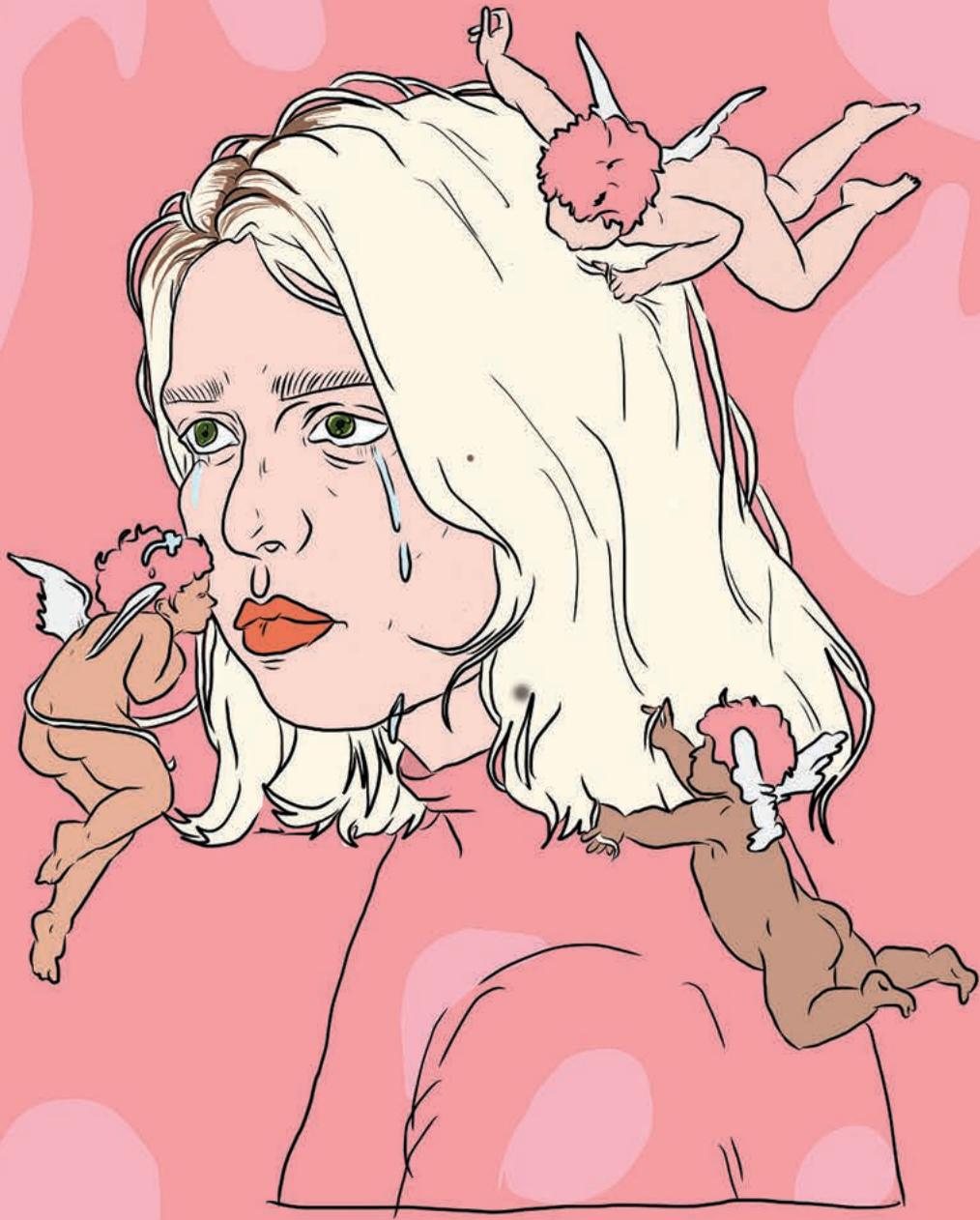
By Dillion Junger, Art By Katherine Wilson

**If her art could talk it would probably speak a language all on its own; it doesn't want to be understood it just wants to be heard and all we as viewers can do is listen and take it all in.**

Katherine Wilson often walks around campus in her Doc Martins, clutching a tablet in one hand and a stylus in the other, always sketching out her latest piece. For her, the act of creating visual art is a ritual driven by her creativity and her macabre fantastical imagination. Every piece seems to capture some sort of absurdist dreamlike world.

Katherine is a CCD student and works as “Printers Devil” for the Talon. She has a passion for art and graphic design that catches the attention of anyone looking at her artwork. She gets personal and deeply unapologetic with her work. Truly, the art is not there to impress the viewer it only stares back in apathy. It is not candid and it isn't interested in aesthetics. It just simply is. Her art carries itself on its punk-rock attitude and its lavish outlandish presentation. Her figures don't exist in worlds; they exist in voids separated from each other almost like peering into your very own pocket dimension. And for a second it feels like they were all sketched by some alternate LSD fueled version of Salvador Dali creating posters for Woodstock in 1968.

Katherine Wilson's love of art was fostered at a young age. “There was never not a time in my life where I wasn't creating something and if I wasn't it was really bad,” she said. She refers to art as a “survival mechanism” in her life. This admiration and complete love of visual creation would remain a hobby until high school where her official art career began.



At the age of 16, she was mentored by a teacher for a year and had the privilege of getting some experience with various digital software such as Adobe Photoshop. This mentor proved to be a valuable asset. In her words “She showed me how to set up my resume and how to not be taken advantage of as a young freelancing artist.” This was her introduction to the world of freelance work and art commission, which definitely comes with its own risks and rewards.

You can set your own rates and work, for the most part as fast or as slow as you wish. But on the internet, there is always someone trying to steal from you. For every good commission story, there are at least 3 bad ones. Katherine recalls an experience when she accidentally sent a work in progress to a client before they had paid her for her time. Suffice to say she never heard back from them. But she doesn't look back on it as a massive mistake.

Instead, she acknowledged her mistake and owned up to it and reshuffled how she structured her commissions so it did not happen again. Occurrences like this are sadly common in the freelance world and even the more prestigious art world of galleries and museums. People very often don't want to pay for art no matter the price.

Art in a business setting is a commodity. It is viewed as a good that has monetary value regardless of its deeper meaning. In short, the art business is cutthroat and largely apathetic towards struggling artists. Part of this is caused by the integration of software such as Photoshop. If everyone can open a program and

make art is it still valuable? Is the work of the artist diminished because of the digital nature of the art itself?

When asked what medium Katherine preferred, she said: “Do you want to be a starving artist or do you actually want to make money?” Digital is more lucrative and easier to market and trade. However, people simply don't view it in the same way as they would view a master painter. They tend to view digital artists as a

**“[Art] is really tied to my overall happiness as a person and my overall functioning.”**

dime a dozen and artists that primarily work in a digital medium are often seen as talentless, almost like the program is holding their hand through the process of creation, which is simply not true.

As a business person Katherine has been able to achieve a level of success that is frankly quite impressive given her very esoteric style. Her main platform is Instagram under the name spycykatastrophe. She charges 100 dollars upfront for each piece she creates and makes a point to inform the consumer that this payment is

non-refundable “It's still my livelihood”

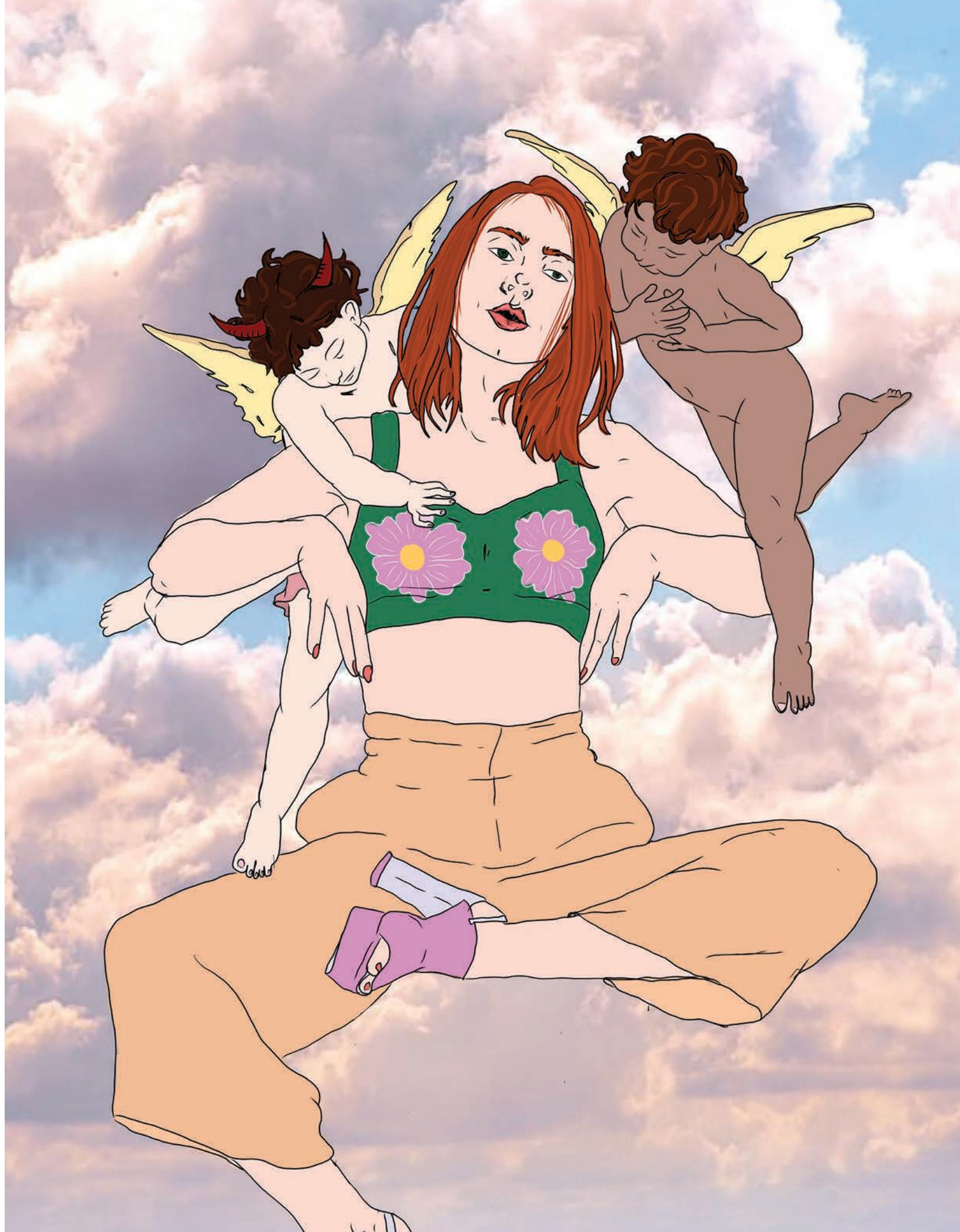
The idea of selling your art as a side gig seems very peculiar at first, it seems unstable. And let's face it, where there is a market for art, there are also critics ready to tear you to pieces and point out every minute flaw in your art. This, despite themselves never having even touched a box of crayons. It is not an easy side hustle but it is rewarding in the best possible way. When you create something

for someone else it can really mean a lot to that person that you took the time out of your day to give them a piece of you, and you can't just buy or sell that. Money, in this case, is the byproduct; not necessarily the end-game for most artists. When asked if creating art ever felt like work, Katherine's answer was no. “The only time art has ever felt like work to me was when I was an art student,” she added.

Katherine Wilson is someone I would describe as an artist's artist she makes what she wants and she enjoys creating for the sake of creating. Selling her artwork is

an added bonus but it most certainly is not the main reason behind her work. The art is a part of her and is intrinsically tied to her emotional state of being.

In essence, Katherine has found a way to bridge the gap between starving artist and successful artist through the use of social media and has achieved a type of balance. In doing so, she creates the things that she wants to create and there are people out there willing to pay for them. She is at or fairly close to creative and financial harmony. ■



The title 'Babysitters Handbook' is written in a playful, hand-drawn style. 'Babysitters' is in multi-colored letters (red, blue, yellow, pink, green), and 'HANDBOOK' is in black, outlined letters. Several colored pencils are scattered around the text, with their tips pointing towards the title.

# Babysitters HANDBOOK

## Tips and Tricks

By Cameron Yarumian

Being a babysitter is a hard side hustle; it takes a lot of patience and care. You need to know what you are allowed to do, how to keep the child entertained, and how to take care of the child in an emergency. Sara Ayoub, a student at the Community College of Denver, babysat for four years because she loves kids and loves taking care of them.

She started her babysitting journey by watching her little cousins. Ayoub never felt like it was work, it was more of a creative fun experience for her. However, when it came to making plans for the kids, she often had a hard time coming up with a backup plan in case of need. With babysitting, you have to be able to think on your feet. Kids can be stubborn and sometimes they don't want to go to the park, or they don't want to color. It is helpful if you have multiple plans in case others don't go well. Due to changes in her living situation, Ayoub stopped babysitting af-

ter four years. However, she had many great things to say about her experience.

An advice she gives to anyone looking to get into babysitting is to "Always keep an open door for communication, be prepared for almost everything because suddenly things will come up, organization is key and lastly have fun." With planning and organization, babysitting can be very fulfilling and enjoyable. Whether you are looking for a hustle in babysitting or it's your first time watching a child, here is how to babysit. The way to get started is to first get CPR and first aid certified. In case of an emergency, you want to be prepared. The next thing you want to do is work on a set schedule for when you are available to babysit. Once you set the days of the week you are able to babysit, it makes it easy for your clients and yourself to schedule a shift.

After preparing yourself, you want to market yourself. You need to let people know when you are available. Word of mouth is often the easiest way to land this job. Start babysitting for people you know. Ask friends who are babysitters and if they know anybody that

needs assistance. Another way you can market yourself is through babysitting websites. The only problem with marketing through websites however, might be age, because many of them have age limits for sign up access. With any new job, you need to prepare. Some ways to do that is: getting parents' and child's information, finding out what activities are okay, and figuring out the child's schedule. This step is important because every parent teaches and nurtures their children in different styles. Another thing you need to know is their usual diet. Kids are very sneaky, and they might try to sneak something into their diet that they do not normally eat (like candy). When the kids try to misbehave, you need to establish with the parents, what they typically do for small misbehaviors. You don't want to punish them too little or too much. After you prepare for the job, you are now in the phase of watching the kids. You want to spend time getting to know them, growing a relationship with the child will get them to like you and listen to you.

Being creative and active with them is vital. You want to know what they like to keep them engaged. Telling stories and creating fun projects for you guys to do once a week will make them excited to see you. Parents are paying you to watch their kid, try to stay off screens. You are paid to be an entertainer for them and to keep them safe. Throughout the day, it is important to check in with them. Kids don't have a sense of time as adults, and they usually forget to perform basic bodily necessities. Check every hour to see if they need to go to the bathroom, drink water, eat or even just rest. They will most likely not tell you these things on their own, so always be sure to ask.

Avoiding mistakes is also vital while watching kids. Do not leave the children in your care alone. As a babysitter, you are there to watch the children in their home and under no circumstances should you leave them. You should not have people coming over to spend time with you while you should be working.

Only allow people over, if the parents have agreed to it. With electronics more prevalent now than ever, you have urges to be on your phone or scrolling through social media. Like other jobs, your electronics should only be used for emergencies. A major part of babysitting is cleaning up after the children. This part is often forgotten; because you are constantly on the go with kids, but it is important. The parents are probably coming home from work and will appreciate coming home to a clean house. A way to get the kids into cleaning up after themselves is to play cleaning games with them. Say whoever picks up the quickest wins or sing the clean-up song. When you give them an incentive, it will most likely get them excited. Becoming a babysitter is a big deal. Parents are leaving you in charge of the most important people in their lives, their children.

So, it is important to take the task seriously and do it responsibly. Babysitting can be a hard job at times, but it can also be very rewarding. The child's safety is the number one priority. If you babysit for you skills you never noticed at the time. You learn communication and relationship building, multi-tasking, time management and organization skills, and negotiation. This will help you with many other occupations and are fully transferable. It makes you confident, you can become a well-rounded person who is not afraid of a challenge. With this, you are now able to start hustling as a babysitter. ■



# TAKE A WALK

Today as I woke up early in the morning I looked outside out of the window I saw it was bright and sunny decided to take my Havanese dog for a walk. My Havanese dog is 1 year old puppy. As I walked outside from my house I started to smell the flowers we have at the front of the yard. Then I continued to walk around the neighborhood, I started to hear the birds and while I turned around I saw squirrels eating.

While I continued to walk my Havanese dog I started to hear the sound of the car passing by, then when I get to the corner of the street of my house I see a women with her dog as well she was heading to the park to take her dog, but what I realize she wasn't wearing a mask. Then, I continued to walk down the street, I had to cross the street but before I did that I had to look both ways if there was no cars coming, then I decided to cross the street safely. After I cross the street my Havanese dog decided to stop and sit down on the grass but what I didn't realize was that the grass was wet and my Havanese dog got a little bit wet.

Then, we started to walk again but we had to cross the street to get to the neighborhood park which is "Sunken Gardens" and what I realize when my dog and I got there people where stretching and I think

they were having a yoga class. Then there was a guy running doing laps around the park, and what I realize the guy wasn't wearing a mask either. Then my dog and I continued to walk around the park seeing a few more people doing exercise walking around the park and I am realizing is that there's not a lot of people in the morning here at the park.

While, me and my dog continued to walk the park we got to the other side of the park and see other people with their dogs some of the people are being friendly and talking to each other about their dogs. While they were talking to each other, they didn't have mask on either but they were a few feet apart and they were enjoying the conversation. So, me and my





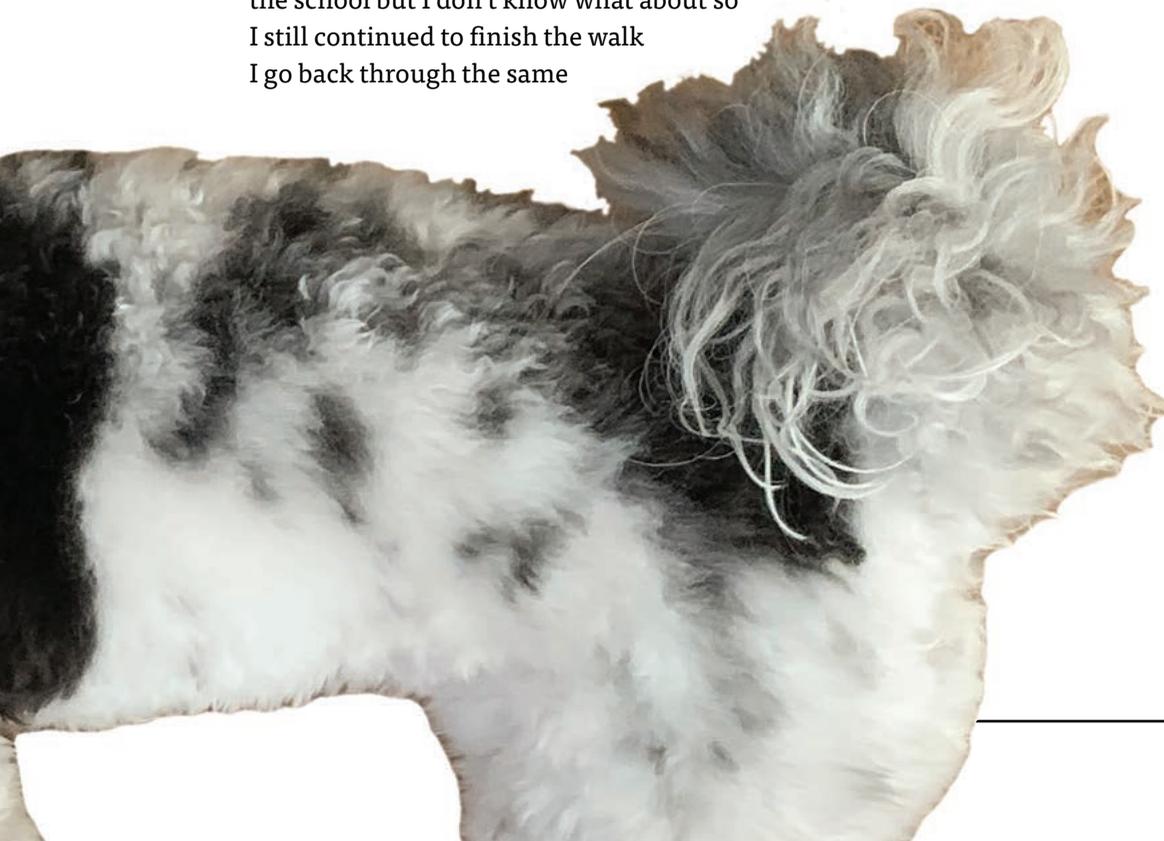
Photo By CJ Fletcher

## by Juvenal Luna

dog continued to walk I started to hear all the cars passing by the park because the park is by a main driving street called "Speer Blvd" that is a big and main street where a lot of cars passes by.

Then, when me and my dog continued to walk I always see my old high school named "West High School" and when I pass by my old school I always think about my old good time memories I had at that school. The main memory I remember is the soccer field because I used to play soccer for my old high school. Then when me and my dog walk around the park one time and pass the old high school I decided to finish the walk and walk back to my house but when I'm about to finish the walk I see other people at the top of the hill of the park but what I realize is that they are wearing mask but I think they work for the "West High School" because students or other people walk up to them and start talking about the school but I don't know what about so I still continued to finish the walk I go back through the same

way I started but this time I see more people walking their dog towards the park either if it's only one person or two persons but they are not wearing mask either then started to think about if they don't care about the Coronavirus but I passed them and hi but I decided not to stop and have a conversation with them. I continued to walk with my dog toward my house to finish the walk which I did, I got to my house and decide to stay outside to enjoy the nice weather which was sunny and bright my neighbors that do have dogs passes by my house to go to the same park that I do they just pass by and say hello to me but we don't have a conversation or anything they just pass by my house. Then I decided to walk inside my house and enjoy the rest of my day and I did have good time taking walk around of my neighborhood and to the park I really enjoyed it. ■



# SNEAKERHEAD

By Alisa Ransom



Photo by: Glodi Miessi

Your heart feels like it's racing a million miles a minute, your fingers are trembling as you stare at your phone screen. You know that if you could just obtain these shoes, these shoes that have been so hyped up, then you could find out the secondary market value of these exclusive kicks. At one point in time, Jasmine O., Julius B., and Kevin U. have all felt this feeling of intense addictive excitement. These three sneakerheads all do shoe flipping as a side hustle to make some extra cash.

So, what is shoe flipping? It is simply sneaker buying and reselling. They aren't just your basic shoes you see on an everyday basis. These shoes are rare and can have really cool backstories about the design. Shoes are no longer

the basic thing you wear to protect your feet. Sneaker reselling is now very common and profitable; according to a Business Insider article, "Sneaker reselling is projected to become a \$6 billion dollar business by 2025." Being a sneakerhead used to be a whole different thing without the online channels that are used today. People would rush to stand in line for hours and they even camped out to try to obtain the hot new shoes that were dropping that weekend. The people who were buying learned about the shoes from word of mouth and catalogs. Nowadays, to hear about the latest drops, there are many sources to get information from; social media, apps and websites such as HyperBeast and High Snobiety play a huge part. With shoe flipping becoming more popular, there

is even a SneakerCon that takes place in different areas of the world. This is a great place to meet your fellow sneakerheads. Why resell sneakers to make extra money? It's a way to potentially make hundreds or even thousands of dollars. While speaking with Kevin, he said that he made a profit of \$1,100 after he sold one pair of Travis Scott shoes for \$1,250 when they originally retailed for only \$150. Julius sold three pairs of shoes and made \$1,500. Jasmine wanted to make room for more shoes, so she sold a few pairs that she no longer wore anymore and made a profit of \$230. All these three had to do was get the shoes in the first place. Once they obtained the shoe, the hard part came. "Do I keep this or do I sell it?" as Jasmine stated. When purchasing shoes for resale, you

need to know your market. You need to know what sizes sell the best.

In order to sell these shoes, you have to go through a process to get them. First, you have to know when a shoe is releasing. There are multiple ways for a shoe drop to happen; it can be as simple as the shoe dropping in store and waiting in line or it can look like being entered into a raffle on the shoe website and hoping you get called and they have the size you want. When asked about any crazy stories that have happened when trying to get a shoe, Kevin said: "I remember this one. I was in line for a pair of Pacsun x Fear of God Vans dropping in Pacsun stores. There were a couple of guys who cut in line. A fight ended up breaking out and security had to escort them out. I ended up being the first person in line for those vans."

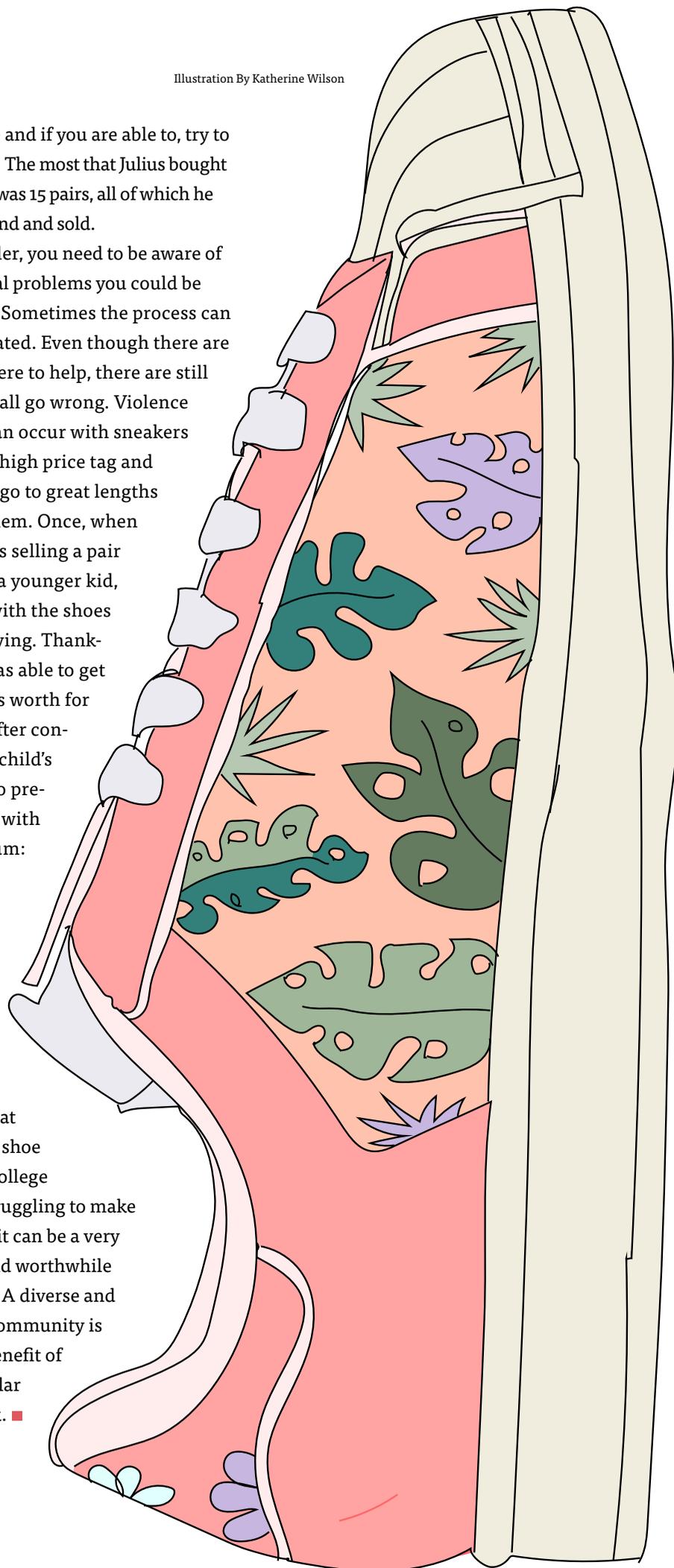
When purchasing shoes that are being resold, you have to be careful as well. Jasmine, Kevin, and Julius have all been sold fake shoes. Once this happens, there is not much you can do other than accept the fact that you got jipped. When you are purchasing shoes from a reseller, do your research and trust your instinct. Try to avoid buying fakes and ask for receipts. Check the prices of other sellers and remember that each shoe size has a different range of demand.

To get started with shoe flipping, not only will you need a love for sneakers, but you will need some money in the bank as well. Julius gave the advice to "save at least \$2,000" to get started since these shoes can be expensive. The most that Kevin spent on shoes was \$989 for a pair of Balenciagas, Julius spent \$800 on Red 11's and Jasmine \$400 on her pair. Two recommended websites for resale are Grailed, StockX and an app called Frenzy that alerts you about release dates. The best time to buy is the initial

release date and if you are able to, try to buy in bulk. The most that Julius bought at one time was 15 pairs, all of which he turned around and sold.

As a hustler, you need to be aware of the potential problems you could be faced with. Sometimes the process can be complicated. Even though there are apps out there to help, there are still ways it can all go wrong. Violence and theft can occur with sneakers that have a high price tag and people will go to great lengths to obtain them. Once, when Jasmine was selling a pair of shoes to a younger kid, he ran off with the shoes without paying. Thankfully, she was able to get her money's worth for the shoes after contacting the child's mother who presented him with an ultimatum: pay what you owe or return the shoes.

Even though there are problems and risks that accompany shoe resale, for college students struggling to make ends meet, it can be a very lucrative and worthwhile side hustle. A diverse and tight-knit community is an added benefit of this particular line of work. ■



# A QUARANTINE WALK IN OCTOBER

WRITTEN BY  
**ZADA HERRERA**

I swung over my shoulder, my navy-blue sweater and laced my black Nike Huaraches. It was time to go on a walk and along with me came my mom and my dog, a white Bichon Poodle named Bones. Once we stepped foot outside the door my mom aimed her lighter and lit a Marlboro cigarette, the faint smoke was being pulled towards my direction. We began on foot and the air had no wind, it felt good, no heat, it was light and cool. There were blue skies and faded clouds with the right amount of sun peeking out behind.

To me, this October feels like it has gone by very quickly. And it has been by far the busiest for me. But, despite the overload of work and fast pace of time, it has always been one of my favorite times of the year. Luckily, much of the neighborhood has their houses and lawns decked out with Halloween decorations such as a blown up Frankenstein, spiderwebs, and pumpkins, I believe it always makes the block more colorful and in essence of the holiday spirit. I suppose some people are expecting trick

or treaters because I saw bowls without candy outside and a couple signs that say, "Trick or Treat." But another con of this October, and specifically this year is the pandemic, I am not sure how Halloween will play out this year for the trick or treaters. I notice today appears to be a popular day to be out for my area. There are many cars coming up and down the street going at somewhat fast pace, it seems people have places

**"KIDS ARE NOT THINKING ABOUT THE ELECTION, THE PANDEMIC, OR SCHOOL."**

to be this morning. Although usually it is very opposite where I live, quiet and not much to notice. As we crossed the road to make a turn towards the park, there was a little boy riding a blue tricycle going around and around in circles and I thought

to myself, how days once consisted of imagination, time, repetition, and playfulness. Kids are not thinking about the election, the pandemic, or school. So, I wonder what it is like to grow up during these

times? But of course, there are different answers depending on the situation.

We were getting closer to the park and I saw a helicopter and a group of geese flying above us. Nearby the park is an elementary school and



once we got near, I saw a flyer hanging on the school's brick wall. I notice it shows their remodel plan and my mom and I wanted to take a closer look at it. As I take a peek at the school's vision I mentioned to my mom, "It looks more modern and futuristic, there are more windows and they are pretty wide, but there is hardly any color or much to play with on the playground." She replied, "You would think with the people's tax money they would add more than windows and nice detail inside but also a playground that is vibrant and fun." We began to move further from it and towards the trail, I was able to see the school in the process of reconstructing along the way and it already appears big. It brought me back to a time when my elementary school was remodeled and even

**"AND IT IS TRUE, FOR SOME THE WEIGHT OF THE PANDEMIC IS HEAVIER, AND SOMETHING AS SIMPLE AS A WALK ALLOWS THERE TO BE TIME WITHOUT STRICT PRECAUTIONS OR WORRY."**

as a kid I would think to myself it was starting to look different, more new, without a variety to imagine and play with.

It felt good to be outside and accompanied by my mom, since coronavirus emerged my family and I have changed much of our social lifestyle and rarely are out unless it is necessary. My mom turned to me and said, "Times are rough for those whose life's can be and have been affected by covid but walks like these allow us to be out and recollect ourselves." And it is true, for some the weight of the pandemic is heavier, and something as simple as a walk allows there to be time without strict precautions or worry. Sometimes I see individuals during a walk with masks and others not but this time there was no other person in sight with a face covering other than us. When we would walk by others, even though we

were wearing masks, people would still walk feet apart. But a couple times I had to distance Bones from other dogs, preventing them both from trying to walk towards each other. Besides being cautious of health measures, the walk was refreshing, peaceful, and provided a pleasing sight to see. In more particular, the season did. Our shoes were crushing the leaves on the ground and I could hear a crunch along with every step, I have always enjoyed that sound. I have also always admired trees, even the ones that kill your grass, but the fall colors, and gloomy turn is a blessing to nature. As I was walking along the trail, my head was bent back looking up at the old and huge trees hovering over us. The trees are in their prime time of fall being full and layered with red, orange,

and gold blending leaves. And for a split second there was no talking, no background noise, and just a moment to enjoy and admire the scenery. I got a quick whiff of a scent that smelled of dried leaves. On the concrete, was the shadow of the tree's trunk from the sun gleaming behind them.

After the forty-five-minute walk we were close to home. The neighborhood was the same as it was when we left, busy. There were neighbors outside conversating, leaf blower sounds in the background, and dogs barking at the mailman. Yet, I felt relaxed and my body felt like I just had a workout, my dog was panting and after he drank some water he laid down, I think he felt the same. It was nice to get out and see what is new in the neighborhood, feel the fall and Halloween atmosphere, and simply get some fresh air.

# The Arts & Social Distancing

6 Tabs



In these strange times, staying connected feels desperately important. We call old friends and distant family, we email our favorite high school teachers, we follow every name we recognize on social media; technology is our new communicator. Well, maybe not so new. But within this larger conversation about what is and isn't essential, it's beginning to feel pretty important.

The arts have managed to make their way to the forefront of this new technological connection. From the Berlin Philharmonic's digital concert hall, to Denver's own Mercury Cafe live open mic, we are creating and maintaining artistic platforms. Right now, this is what's important to us. Live streams from musicians, new support for local artists' online storefronts, open mics where poets and musicians are sure to be heard; this is our new world.

So, what does it mean when this is all over? Will the arts remain an 'essential' part of our world? It's nice to imagine that this distant yet stubbornly connected community will continue on in the days after social distancing: mass gatherings at cafes to hear poetry and local artists finding enough support to live off their passions. When this is all over, it'll be important to remember that we turned to the arts for comfort and that during this insanity we were most grateful for our artists and the escape they offered.

By Ella Toupin





Hey! I miss you. Illustration by Daniel Barreto

# Cakewalk

By Sara Ayoub Sawaged



**R**ania Musharbash has short curly hair, pretty blue eyes, and she loves wearing athletic clothes and jewelry. She loves earrings but her favorites accessories are simple rings. She is not too tall. However, when she's in a room everyone notices. With a loud personality and an extremely creative mind, Rania is a very fun person to be around. She is an expert at event planning. Since 2005, she has done many successful events including her brother's wedding with six hundred guests. Rania prides herself on turning dream events into realities by simply talking to her clients. Her hands make the impossible possible.

They are extremely important in her success because she does a lot of backdrops and centerpieces from scratch. She turns construction paper into beautiful and colorful flowers. On days that she has events, Rania plans for everything. With usually visible papercuts all over her hands from getting all the centerpieces ready, she leaves her house ready to take on the day. She has extreme time management skills and she is extremely organized. As an event planner, good vendor contacts are important assets, which thankfully, she has. There are high expectations when it comes to event plan-

ning. This, not just from clients but also from event planners themselves. Rania always wants to outdo herself and takes every event personally. Event planning can be complicated and extremely stressful. Many people might think it's easy but Rania believes it is the complete opposite. Sometimes things just do go as planned it gets rough and complicated.

Rania co-owns an event planning business called Lasting Moments. There are two locations: one in Canada and the other one in Colorado. They have started their business about two months ago. So, they're "just getting started" as Rania says.

When asked to compare corporate events and social events, Rania said they were completely different. She prefers social events simply because she gets to see her clients' dreams come true one small detail and one step at a time. In order to assure satisfaction, Rania asks a couple of important questions that give her a better understanding of client needs. She would first ask about their expectations, budget, and theme. She also always finds out if there is a religion or culture that she should put into consideration. "Honestly the little things count more than the big things," she said.

The budget is one of the most important things to keep in mind while planning an event. Rania always meets with clients to make sure both parties are on the same page. Dealing with clients is a part of the job and it is not always the easiest. It is important to have the communication skills to deal with complicated clients. “They want a champagne lifestyle but they live on a beer budget,” Rania said jokingly. When you deal with situations like that, take a deep breath and explain to the clients why they can’t have certain things. But do not just say no. Instead, give them alternatives that fit their budget.

After meeting with clients comes the time for picking out the venue location. Rania is the kind of event planner who wouldn’t just make decisions. She includes the clients every step of the way. “The event is for my client not for me,” she said.

Event planning can be complicated, fun and hectic but for some people including Rania, it is a hobby they can’t live without. When asked about her favorite event, Rania’s answer was her brother’s wedding. It was a six hundred people event. Planning it was tough to handle, but she knew that with enough preparations, she could do it. She had to make sure to get the right flowers, a limo, and many other necessary items. The most important task, however, was making sure the day went perfectly. From the bride getting her hair done in the morning all the way to cake cutting at the ceremony. It’s hard work but definitely worth every sweat.

While it is important to always plan ahead, event planners know that things sometimes just don’t go as planned; either for the best and worst. Last-minute parties like the Superbowl are common in event planning. Rania once had three days to plan one. When asked about her experience planning such parties, she answered that she loves them as long as she has easy access to the necessary equipment.



Rania’s least favorite genre to work has to be bachelor and bachelorette parties. According to her, no matter how much you plan, something always goes the opposite way. Everyone gets drunk and things start going bad. “No matter how fancy and nice you plan it or how much time you spend to make sure everything goes as planned, something will end up on the other side of the world. They think that’s the last time they can have fun and drink,” she said. “I have been to many events and I have seen it all” she added while laughing.

A huge part of having a successful event planning business is a good online presence. Hashtags help get attention from potential clients, so it is important to a well-maintained web page. Rania is just getting started with her business and it will take sometime before social media gets as big as she wants it to be.

While there are many apps available to make event planning easy, most of them are quite confusing. Also, it is important to keep in mind that having an event planner a way to turn dream events into realities without lifting a finger. ■

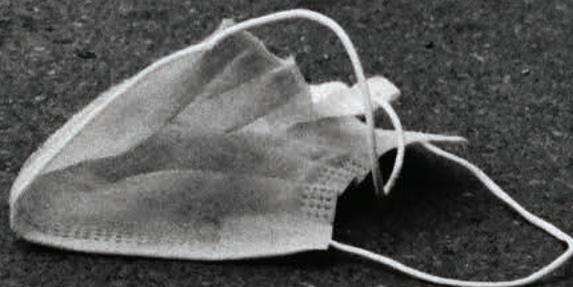


# A Pentax Photographs a Pandemic

By Jenna Duke

Over the course of two weeks in September 2020, I documented the coronavirus pandemic in Denver with my 35mm Pentax film camera. As these photographs were taken and the film eventually developed, COVID cases spiked nationally, a looming election day approached, and Americans felt more uneasiness. It seemed like a dream – an anomaly not to be ignored. The country seemed to be in a state of turmoil. To be shown these images a year ago would have been unbelievably eerie - now they are the norm.

Before 2020, the earth was already in dire need of attention from its inhabitants. With single-use plastic becoming more prevalent due to the demands of COVID-19, our planet not only calls for attention – it's crying out for action. 'COVID-waste' is threatening our environment. Plastic gloves and face masks, presumably used only once, are left with Mother Nature to deal with on the ground and in our oceans. In an interview with *The Paris Review*, E.B. White once said, "One role of the writer today is to sound the alarm. The environment is disintegrating, the hour is late, and not much is being done." That was stated in 1969. While the primary focus this year has been on eradicating the virus and protecting our people, I set out to sound the alarm for the side of an pandemic that no one seems to be talking about.











**THE GOLDEN  
TICKET  
TO  
COLORADO'S  
CANDYLAND**

←5280→

By Deja'von Crittendon  
Photo By Donald Gianatti



**G**olden aspen trees for miles. Fall is upon us and as the leaves turn beautiful vibrant colors like tasty candy. Aspen, Colorado is a destination you want to put on your bucket list to view Fall at its finest.

With some of the main attractions of sightseeing for the little ski town, there is plenty of breathtaking views. Maroon Bells being one of my most favorite sightseeing destinations when there. Although the sun is out, make sure to bring: a warm jacket, sunglasses, your camera, sunblock, and a face mask.

On our first stop is Smuggler Mountain trail. The views are to die for. In certain parts of the trail you will get blasted with sunlight so be prepared to whip out those handy dandy sunglasses so you may

see all that mother nature has to offer.

The air is a little nippy but not too bad. You can hear the salty crunchiness of some of the fallen leaves that have fallen from the trees. I like to look for pretty leaves that I can spray with hairspray and keep them in the back of my phone case. Another fun activity is a little game that I like to play every year is called leaf fight. I like to gather

friends and we pick up piles of leaves and throw them at each other. Kind of like a snowball fight but with leaves. We play the game all the way back to our car making sure to be mindful of the other hikers around us looking to enjoy the cinematic views that the trail has to offer. It just feels like a picture out of a movie or like I'm dreaming. The infamous Maroon Bells is a tourist hot spot whenever you're in town. With its ever changing breathtaking views, it isn't hard to snap a million-dollar photo from this location.

The atmosphere was sweet with the rich maple scent of Autumn. The view was a candyland of yellow aspen leaves and patches of red with a snow-covered mountain reflected in the clear brown lake. It was so serene like a scene out of the movie 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'.

My Friend Trish said, "Reminds me of the days I use to live in Maine. The views from the town I'm from were just amazing. And this makes me feel like I have a little piece of home here!"

If you ever are in Aspen and see a '77 brown Volkswagen Bus with Paddington the bear painted on it, that is My friend Trish Sheppard. She hosts Pop Up Read with Moxie, (the name of the VW bus). Riding through town in that bus enhanced the experience all together while going to fun destinations around town. Just listening to some classic Simon and Garfunkel, Elton John, and with a hint of John Denver really gave me nostalgic groovy Autumn vibes.

Speaking of John Denver, this leads us into our next destination to The John Denver Sanctuary on our way through town. Now if you thought Maroon Bells was a beautiful breath-taking site, wait till you get a load of the colorful John Denver Sanctuary. Now I know that I have said the

**"Makes you feel as if you escaped reality and have been taken to Wonka's Chocolate Factory."**

word breathtaking quite a few times throughout this piece, but when I say breathtaking, I mean BREATHTAKING! If you've never seen a true fall turning of the leaves in years, this is the place to be. With the mixture of reds and yellows, oranges and greens. You'll be able to see something that most people only get to see in pictures on the internet or from living Vicariously through

friends. Try sitting on rocks near the stream or lay on the ground with a friend or two and looked at the sky with the colorful trees surrounding.

You won't even have the urge to blink for a solid five minutes because you didn't want to miss one second of what I was staring at. Rating the experience on a scale of 1 to 10 for all three locations, I would have to give it a 10/10. Five-star rating and would highly recommend to fellow Colorado natives seeking adventure during a pandemic.

Also, to tourist looking for that fall foliage that they don't get to see on an everyday basis in the fall season. And to think it only takes 3.5 hours It's a great escape from reality to just enjoy a day in Nature.

With all that walking and sightseeing you might develop an appetite and I highly recommend visiting Aspen Perk Café. Just picture yourself enjoying a grilled cheese panini with this Fall foliage view as dessert. ■

Mischa live streams to a social media site called “Twitch” and it’s full of live-streamers doing a wide range of activities. The site has different categories; like gaming, art (digital artwork, painting and more), chatting, jewelry making, music (music making software, singing, instrumental work), vlogging, and much more. Mischa streams Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday from 12 pm Eastern Standard time to 5 pm Eastern Standard time.

Mischa primarily does gaming while talking to her viewers about the game she is playing. She also discusses LGBTQ+ issues and interests frequently, as both she and the majority of her viewers are a part of that community. Mischa’s online screen name, Mischacrossing, is based on the classic Nintendo franchise. She fondly remembers her humble beginnings enjoying the game before beginning her streaming career: *“My username on Twitch is a play on words of my favorite Nintendo franchise of all time and what has gotten me into streaming in the first place. Thanks to the good old days while I was on Tumblr and I was, and still am, obsessed with a game called Animal Crossing.”* Back between 2013 and 2015, Mischa would spend hours on Tumblr looking at things on Animal Crossing forums to get inspiration for the respective games with her friend Sarah. Sarah was also a streamer of the game before Mischa, which led to the latter’s initial interest. Mischa then began live-streaming herself on YouTube in 2016 when the feature launched on the site. From there, her community seemed to grow overnight. Many people were able to meet and bond over their mutual love of Animal Crossing thanks to Mischa’s work. However, as the years have gone by, she has delved into different games, expanding her horizons as a streamer and expanding her community. Much has changed since 2016, but Mischa is much the same. Streaming does not feel like a chore to her still. *“Since I have had this job, it is easy to get burned out and tired of playing games you’ve played over and over again online, but the thing that will never get boring is the amazing friendships and conversations I get to have with my friends on a weekly basis.”* It was on friendships she built this community, and it is on friendships she still relies. Dyllon, who is also a live-streamer on Twitch, speaks about his lifelong struggles with mental health. He helps his followers feel less alone with their struggles and encourages people to get professional help with their issues be-

# Twitch Hustles

By Ryan Hansen

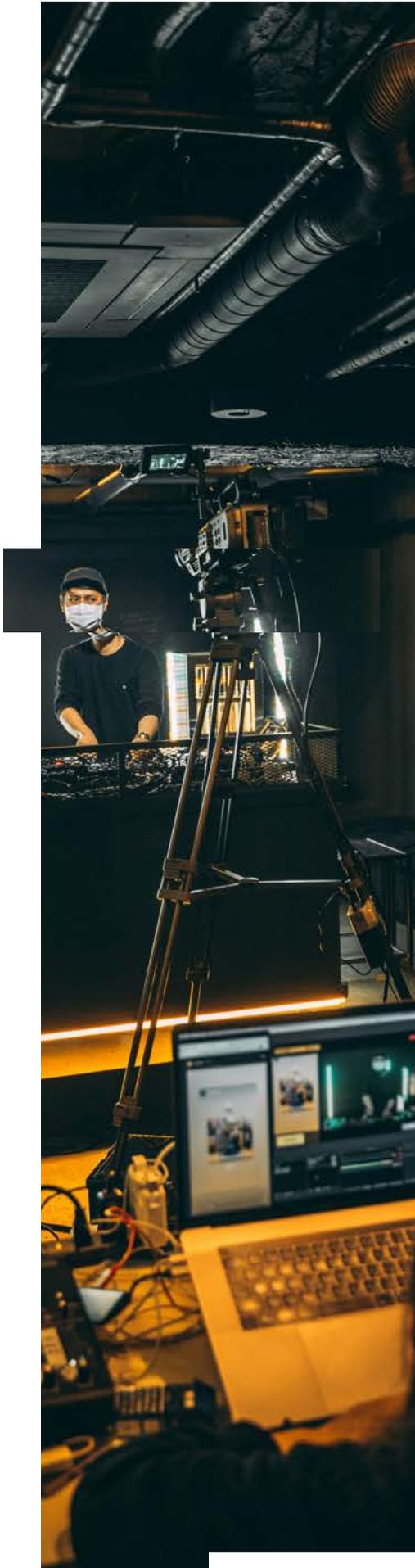
cause he is not a licensed professional. He highlights the more taxing aspects of such a personal profession: *“Streaming is very fun when you don’t think about the number of people who follow you but it’s always in the back of your mind nagging you to do your absolute best. It’s kind of a double-edged sword. If you focus on your numbers and they are normally low you’ll start to doubt yourself. If you notice your numbers are high, you’ll feel the need to overwork yourself and not focus on what you want to do. It’s a complicated cycle.”*

**“Streaming is very fun when you don’t think about the number of people who follow you but it’s always in the back of your mind nagging you to do your absolute best.”**

In comparison to Mischa, his desired area of discussion can be more challenging, though he still does stream his favorite game. Dyllon is a part of an online community that has a group of people talking about mental health just like him. They are called “Heart-Support.” *“The reason my main focus is mental health is not only because I love helping people, I just want to share my experiences to people and let them know they’re not alone and it’s an integral part of my life that I am struggling with. It’s the only personal part of my life I like sharing because the rest of it is just downright depressing.”* Said Dyllon. He began to tell me how he got into streaming as well, he mentioned that he

knows the same Sarah Mischa knows, Sarah was also the one who got him into streaming. He used to be in her evening streamings almost every night she streamed, but sadly he doesn’t see her as much because of differing schedules. Back in the day, his username on twitch was different from what it is now; it was Gooperatives (pronounced \*Go-Operatives) Everyone; myself included called him Goop. But around the same time I discovered his streams, he changed his username to fit his real name and wwit is DyllonKG. *“the reason I changed my name from Gooperatives to DyllonKG was because the name just didn’t suit me anymore and back then when I had that username I was more abrasive, brash and very rude. But over the years I have learned to be patient with other people and myself. More importantly, I have learned to trust people more and let people in.”* Dyllon said talking about his name change. Dyllon live streams from Sunday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday 1 pm Central Standard Time to 8 pm Central Standard Time.

Throughout all the years I have known Mischa and Dyllon, they have been extraordinary individuals. They have remained true to themselves and continued to cultivate their own communities and have done wonderful things online and offline. I have learned more about myself when I’m with them. I am one of the people that Dyllon has helped when it comes to talking about mental health struggles, he has given me so much coping mechanisms and good one-on-one talks about how I am not alone and much more. Mischa and her community have helped me feel less alone as well! All the people in are just like me they are part of the LGBTQ+ community and I can relate to what they’re going through. I love my chosen family. ■



WHAT DOESN'T

KILL YOU MAKES

YOU STRONGER

A PHOTO ESSAY OF  
KAREN ESCAMILLA

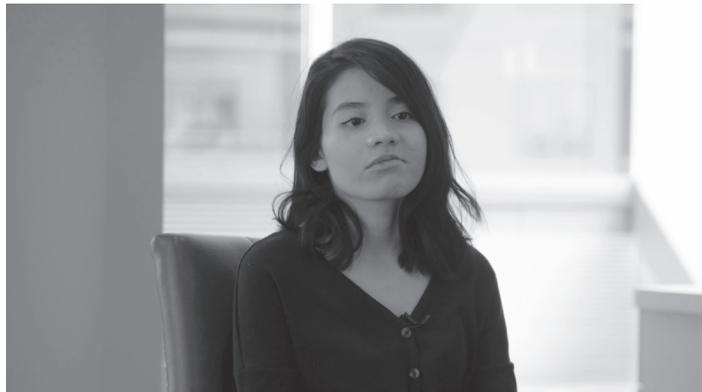
Original Film By Logan Weaver

"What Doesn't Kill You Makes You Stronger", Karensitta Escamilla's real life road rage story in her own words as told to CCD student Logan Weaver. *Faculty Adviser Note:* Logan Weaver is a CCD student who has a successful photography and videography side hustle. Karensitta Escamilla's family hired Logan to tell the inspiring story of Karen's gunshot injury and recovery as a video story. This photo essay is a collection of screen captures from that video story. The pandemic interrupted the full development of the video story into a traditional feature article including a follow-up interview with Karen. - Dr. Dan

# ACT #1 THE GUNSHOT



My name is Karen Escamilla, I'm 21 years old, and I'm from Denver Colorado.



I had just moved to my first apartment, and was driving casually, we were in the middle of traffic and as soon as the traffic started moving, I just remember....



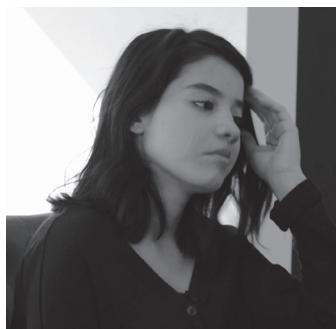
Looking at my rear view mirror and seeing his wheels turn, and then I just remember it felt like I was hit in the face really hard,



I remember, my cousin, making sure, I was breathing... I blacked out, it felt like forever.



But it was just the ballistic hit, it hit me so hard I just closed my eyes and didn't really wake up



Until the blood started pouring on me.

# ACT #2 THE BLOOD STARTED POURING



My first instinct was to roll, I mean to bring the mirror down.



I opened the visor and looked at my face



And I just remember...Everything I was missing right here, was down here.



I don't remember ever having a feeling...that this was it



I just remember [thinking] after that moment on...



Nothing was going to be the same.

# ACT #3 THE LONG ROAD TO RECOVERY



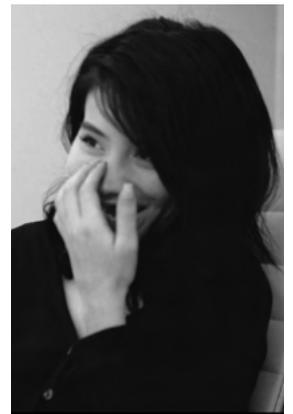
(Karen's doctor described how it will be a good year before Karen will be able to smile.)



I met [my doctor] 3 months ago. So blown away that someone who has never heard of me or hasn't really heard what really happened.



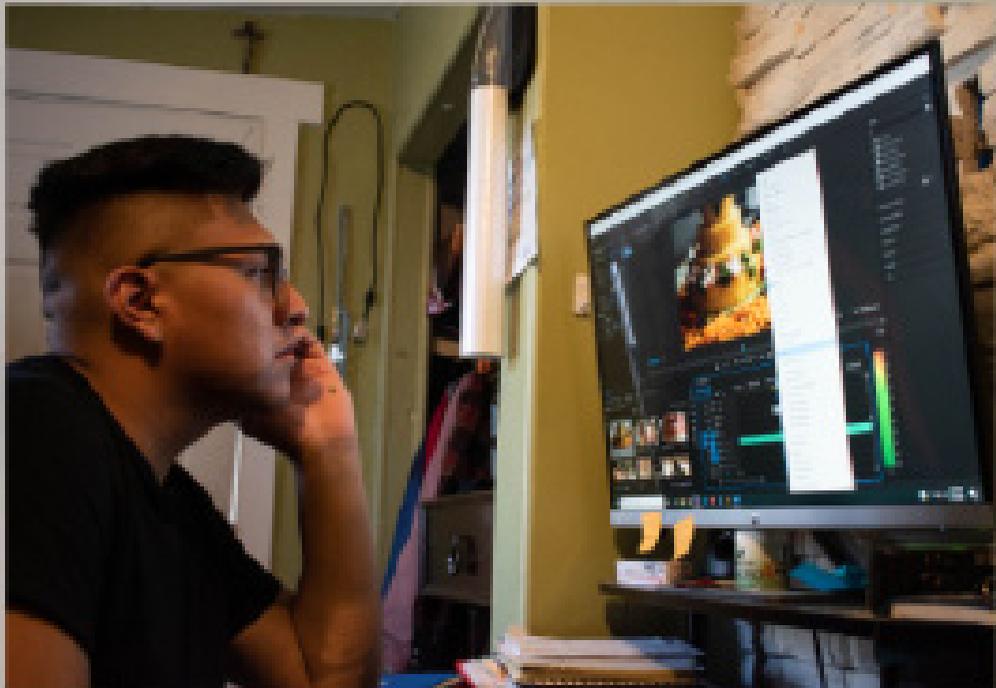
Even though she's donating teeth, still goes above and beyond to try and help more.



I can't wait for the day that I get to smile



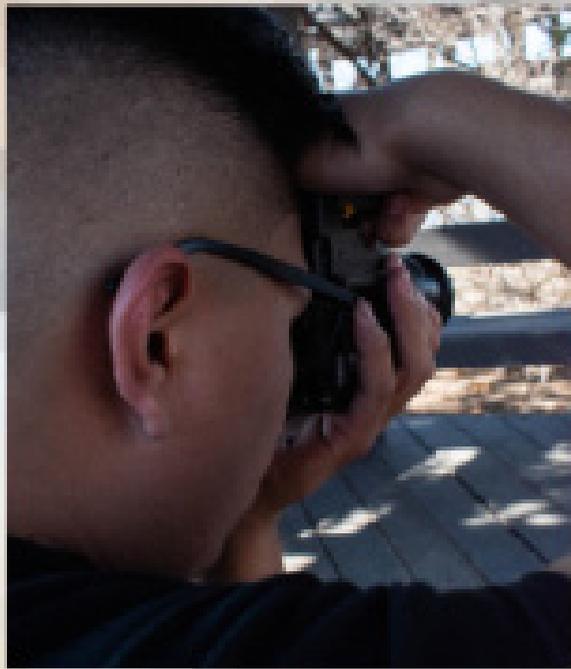
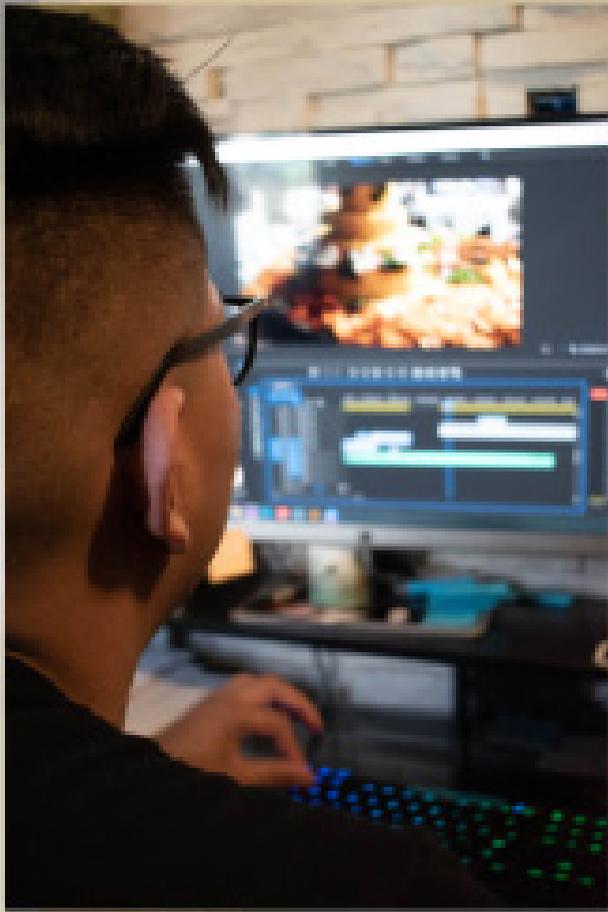
And tell her thank you and she can understand it.



## DIGITAL RENAISSANCE MAN

By Shania Sharleen

What once began as a hobby, a 20-year-old's interest in photography has now transformed into a source of income. Hugo Joel Aguina Gomez, a part-time student at CCD, operates a small digital media business. It includes photography, videography, and even DJing as well. He has been doing it for quite awhile now.



# And the Deep River Ran On: A Profile of President Freeman

By Zada Herrera



Commencement 2015

When asked what he would put on a billboard for the whole world to see, President Freeman answered, “you shall love your crooked neighbour, with your crooked heart.” A line from the poem “As I Walked Out One Evening” by poet Wystan Hugh Auden. Freeman’s optimism for our planet’s future and love for our neighbors’ springs from his time as CCD’s President interacting with dedicated and active students.

Comparing his role as president to that of a symphony conductor, Freeman observed that he wouldn’t be able to successfully do his job without the students, staff, and faculty at CCD. “... [A] conductor alone cannot make music - it takes a whole symphony to make music. And I like the notion that what presidents do best is we stand there and help the musicians perform to their absolute best. And those musicians for CCD, first off, are our students, our staff, and our faculty. I can’t exclude any of those from the symphony or we wouldn’t have a symphony.”

CCD is a symphony that will soon have

a new conductor. At the end of December 2020, Dr. Freeman will close his final show as conductor of CCD’s symphony and reflect on a life filled with learning.

From a young age, Freeman was academically inclined and devoted but also

**“My first job was when I was nine years old.”**

on a tough grind. He grew up in a Catholic family with four brothers and a sister. “My first job was when I was nine years old. I would sweep the front and back of the convent, where the sisters of St. Joseph lived and I would get paid fifty cents, a glass of milk, and cookies.”

This continued every Saturday for the young boy. He was such a hard worker that he returned one snow day with nothing to sweep and after repeatedly asking, “Are you sure there is nothing I could do?” he was paid his traditional allowance. He recalled afterwards a sister saying to him,

“Study hard this week and you will be fine.”

Due to the same persistence and diligence he showed so early on in life, he would later receive a certificate in economics from Fircroft College, a bachelor’s degree in sociology and economics from Antioch College, and a master’s degree in labor and industrial relations from the University of Illinois. These would eventually earn him the titles of Associate Professor of Economics at Jackson State University, Senior President and Provost



**“Pity me that the heart is slow to learn what the swift mind beholds at every turn.”**

at University of Indianapolis, and President at Albany State University.

Everette recalled one memory when he worked as a lonely instructor at Rutgers University. During his time there, he attended his first convocation for the institution’s president, Edward J. Bloustein. In his speech, he said quoted from poet, Edna St. Vincent Millay.

The moment left Freeman so astonished that he asked the president about the origin of the quote. To his surprise, Bloustein informed him the book, *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems*, was sitting on his desk in his office; all he had to do was let the receptionist know, write down the source of the quote, and while he was there: sit in the president’s chair.

Freeman sheepishly made his way to the office and immediately noticed the book but before jotting down the name he said, *“I eased into the chair, it rocked for a moment and I thought to myself ‘I could do this.’”*

And eventually, he did. Over the course of two decades, he not only has carried numerous titles in institutions but has carried the tradition of sitting in the president’s chair and creating a line of memories for students.

In September of 2013, he received a call from Nancy McCallin, former president of CCD, confirming he was the finalist to be the upcoming president. This news reminded him of a time at the start of his career when he would teach non-traditional adult students at Rutgers University in the evenings. *“...[W]hen this job was offered to me, I said, ‘you get to go full circle, working with non-traditional students ... you can end your career in the same place. So, I thought it was the best*



Muslim Unity Event CCD 2018

job on earth coming to the Community College of Denver.”

Serving as President of CCD allowed him to once again work in a similar environment surrounded by diversity and equity. During his time at CCD, Freeman has helped the college increase diversity and student success with over 11,00 students from 45 countries, improve support programs, and has received various multi-million dollar grants for STEM ensuring a pathway of opportunities and accomplishments for all CityHawks.

He spoke promising words of the college’s aim for the near future and stated, *“CCD will be thriving and selling in key areas...that is equity, accessibility, and quality. CCD has a laser-like focus on equity: equity in the way we do pedagogy, help students with outcomes, and how we try to have faculty and staff that reflects the student body.”*

There will still be ways to maintain com-

munication with him such as his LinkedIn, Twitter, and Facebook profiles (although they will pivot to private). After joking about making a Snapchat and TikTok, he expressed his hope that students will keep in contact with him as he was able to do with mentors after graduating from college. Freeman will be a free man from his tenure - but his respect and devotion to faculty and students is everlasting.

Freeman will continue living in Denver for his love of the mountains and the Colorado Symphony. In lieu of presidency, he plans to spend his retirement listening to his grand collection of vinyl records and learning how to play the upright bass.

While CCD’s symphony carries on with its music and begins its performance with a new conductor, the beautiful arrangement once performed with President Freeman will certainly continue to echo on throughout the campus.



Somos Event CCD 2016

# Putting the Cam in Camera

By Katrina Singleton

As a side hustle, photography seems to be the easiest and most effective way to make extra money, as well as a popular hobby. Knowing your personality as a photographer can help particulate a unique identity as a photographer; it can be the key to having a successful side hustle and managing your expectations, which makes photographs worth needing.

I followed and interviewed my subject, Cam Yarumian, on the “Evolution of Journalism”, and learned her ways of having photography as a side hustle; a quick and easy way to make a living. As we talked it out, she gave me insights on photography—how fun and easy it is to take a camera and capture one’s moment to love and cherish forever. Her main go-to was wedding photography.

Since Cam has remembered, she grew up with photography as a hobby. As a child, it was all fun and games to have a toy camera and view the joyful cartoon character Sponge Bob Square Pants clicking from slide to slide. As she grew up, her interest in photography never vanished from her life. It continued with the good ol’ trendy iPhone. She started taking pictures with her best friend in the creek area behind their houses, with all its atmosphere.

Later, she received her first camera, a Canon point-and-shoot, with no ability to change the lenses, but good enough to get a decent shot. She moved on to a Nikon, then upgraded to a Canon G-320. “I still have the first camera I started with, but I don’t have the Nikon anymore.”

From that day forward, her passion for photography grew to the point where she would never give up on being the best at capturing precious moments. “I guess my



Photo By Marco Xu

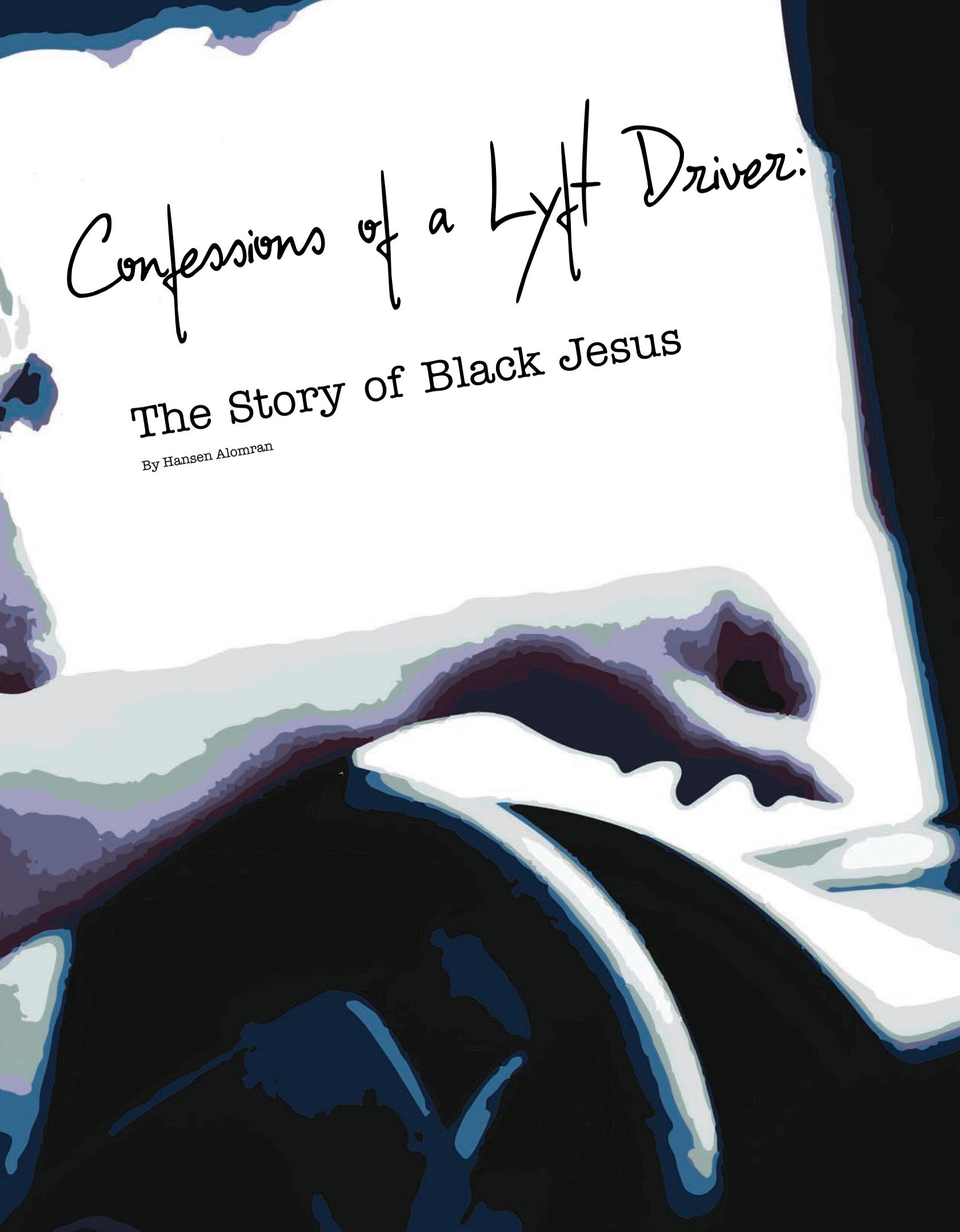
passion for photography grew from doing it all the time with my best friend. And from there it progressed to where I now enjoy taking photos of just about anything.”

It all began with just something to post on social media and Instagram—to get something out there for her followers to view. Then, it became a freelance hobby in California where she used to live. She would begin taking pictures at events; then her friends reached out to her to take pictures at their friends’ weddings, backyard concerts, kid events and senior pictures. Later, she carried on her legacy to others, making her voice heard and to gather more professional experience. “I never worked for a yearbook or anything. I’m co-enrobed with ACC, where I’m a photo editor.”

Although Cam charges by the hour for editing work, she still makes a mean piece of art. “If clients want editing work, I charge extra because it takes more of my time.” She is considering carrying on her legacy with photography, without it being job related. Photography opens the door to a golden opportunity, expanding her horizons to become more familiar with her passion, along with being an easy way to start a living. “I would never want the side hustle as my only job—that’s why I want to go into photojournalism.”







# Confessions of a Lyft Driver:

## The Story of Black Jesus

By Hansen Alomran

## Faculty Adviser Note:

In Spring semester 2020, Hassan and I had an idea for a podcast series named, 'Confessions of a Lyft Driver' inspired by the HBO series 'Taxicab Confessions'. Hassan wanted to share interesting stories from his personal experience as a Ride share driver. We were only able to record one episode of the series before the pandemic. The interview below was really meant to be a preliminary exploration of the stories Hassan was willing to tell from the front seat. The interview below has been lightly edited for content, language, and coherence.

Dr. Dan

### Act 1 - Hassan meets Black Jesus and makes a connection

Oh, I have another instance where I was taking a train to Aurora. I got off work and it was snowing like hell. I said I'm going to call Uber.

But before I called. I was reading into some history. About how the U.S. Marine Corps was started because I was reading these articles and how John Adams and Thomas Jefferson were basically dealing with Libyan pirates in Tripoli. And they had to build up a force, basically, a naval force to combat those extreme Islamist pirates. And what the article was getting into how the U.S. Military has been fighting Islam for over 300 years. I started thinking about the U.S. Marine Corps song that they would recite about the shores of Tripoli. This is freaking crazy, like, wow this is an amazing thing to know.

So the driver pulls up. This African American guy. And he's pretty cool. It smells like Black and Mild in the car. That's like a cigar. They have plastic tips. And they have a pungent smell. They don't smell too bad. They don't smell like cigarettes.

This guy seems pretty cool. I was talking to him and... I didn't mention that I read that article and he talked about being in the U.S. Marine Corps.

I said, 'Oh, really!' Because I just read an

article about the history of the Marines. But he said, 'Yeah, yeah'. I said, 'Damn, you know this is the universe speaking. And he said, 'yeah, for sure. Yeah, man, we're blessed for sure' and I'm like this Dude is cool. We're having a good conversation, but it's mostly about how he was in the Marine Corps and he flew B-52s.

That's when the lies... he was basically lying about it. But I didn't find out until later because I was ignorant of what a B-52 was and he just kept claiming that he was Marine infantry who killed 24 people and that he flew B-52s. I said, 'OK! I'd like to know more!' Because it was interesting, like WOW! I was just reading about this and I met somebody who was in the Marines. You know I should connect with this person. I would like to learn from you. And he said, 'Ok! Ok! And he gave me his number and...he contacted me.

But here's the thing. I forgot to say the funniest thing...is that he was claiming he was Black Jesus and that he was being watched by the government... because he knew secrets and that he was indeed like Black Jesus.

Basically, he's talking about being the chosen one... And that's what piqued my interest. What does this guy know? It's a weird coincidence that this Dude is saying he's in the Marines and that he's like, he knows this secret stuff and that he's like Black Jesus.

### Act 2 - Things between Black Jesus and Hassan get weird

And he came the next morning, the very freaking next morning to where I was at. And I was like, this dude is kinda crazy. But I guess, he drove down. He was running some errands. He was pretty normal. He was looking for a roomie. He was actually looking for a roommate for him at his house. Because he had a house. And he was looking to rent out his rooms. And I was looking to get out of that apartment...I met up. It was pretty normal.

So I went to check out his house. It was a good sized house, alright, for this guy having this sized house. I get inside. It's a freaking barn, dude. Like liquor bottles everywhere. Black and mild butts. It was just like crazy. I'm thinking, 'Dude. If I live here am I going to have to clean this...up constantly?' And then his roommate was real sketchy. Quiet. Kept to himself. Kinda pushed back. This dude. I wasn't even trying to look in his room. I just wanted to look at the place. But he literally pushed me back from his room. So it was kinda sketchy...a bad energy.

Black Jesus asks to hang out. 'Yeah, I got this chick and she wants to chill tonight. Let's kick it tonight.' And I said, 'Alright, Alright, cool. But I have to work.' But he said, 'I'll pick you up'. I'm like 'Alright! ...

So he comes and picks me up at work that night. I was a dishwasher at Sushi Den.

It smelled like alcohol in the car. And he said, 'here drink some of this'. This dude was driving drunk. And I said, 'Ok. Naw, I'm good.' And as we left, I wanted to get out of the car but I didn't want to offend anybody because I just barely met this person. He's speeding down i-25 at like 110 miles per hour drunk just cutting through everybody. Surprisingly we didn't get into an accident. So we went to his friend's house. That's where the chick he was talking about was.

I find out from his friend that Black Jesus actually worked at Best Buy. I'm thinking, 'Alright so this dude was in the Marines but now he works at Best Buy'. And the chick, he left this chick which was supposedly like the chick he was chillin' with at his friend's house with his friend. And that was kinda sketchy as is. But I didn't think

anything of it. I'm thinking, 'Alright. I'll just go with the flow.'

And that night we drink a few beers and then later on maybe 2 in the morning I was taken back to where I lived. But he was drunk again, when he was driving me back. And as he was driving me back there happened to be cops. You know what he does? He rolls the window down and said, 'Hey, How's it going officers?'. And I got freaked the hell out. And I'm thinking, 'Is this guy serious?' Does he want to get pulled over? Surprisingly the cops respond positively and don't even pull the guy over. I'm thinking, 'Holy s--- this guy is really sketchy.' And so then I hope that he doesn't call me tomorrow.

### **Act 3 - Hassan introduces Black Jesus to Charles Manson**

The next day he freaking contacts me. I said, 'Dude, I have to work today'. So he said, 'I'll come after work'. I said, 'I'm planning to go have a few drinks after work.' And Black Jesus picks him up from work.

One of my...co-workers was this older guy who kinda looks like Charles Manson. He was really in the U.S. Navy. And he started talking. He wanted to get to know. Because I told him about him this guy was in the U.S. Marine Corps. He wanted to get to know him. So he came to the bar and Black Jesus was kinda sketchy. Quiet. He had like a quiet demeanor. He's just looking around, you know, like he was looking to start some problems. I'm thinking, 'oh, man'. He was kinda sketchy. Socially awkward.

My co-worker Charles Manson who had been in the U.S. Navy starts talking to him. To get something out of him. To start a conversation. So, of course, Black Jesus says to

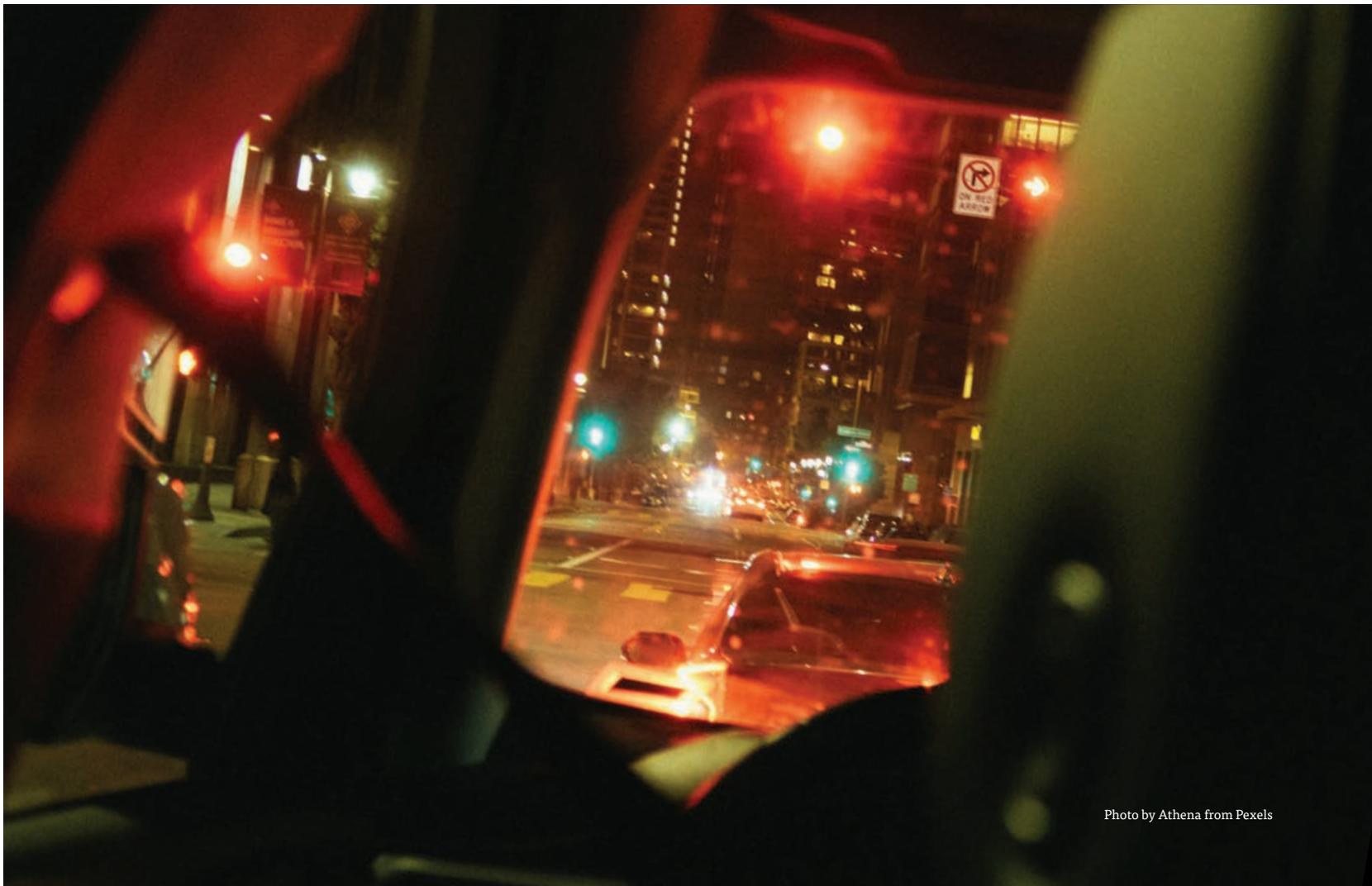




Photo by Tim Samuel from Pexels

Manson, 'I was in the U.S. Marine Corps' And he said, 'Oh, really! What rank were you?'

And yada yada. I didn't hear what they said from there. But he said he flew B-52s' and there was a weird look on Manson's face, like 'Oh, really! Oh! Really!' And he said that he was a HALO diver who killed 24 people.

Mr. Manson-look-alike said, 'Hassan come here, I need to talk to you for a quick second. He's telling me he was in the U.S. Marine Corps and that he flew B-52s. Hassan, I'm going to let you know right now that B-52s haven't existed since World War 2. They haven't been flown since World War 2.' And I said, 'Are you serious?' and he said, 'Yeah, this guy is lying. This guy is lying.'

My other buddy starts talking to Black Jesus outside. And they started getting sort of in each other's face. Black Jesus says, 'Do you know what I do to people that, who don't listen to me. And don't acknowledge this?' And he pulls out his freaking knife.

And I said, 'oh, crap!' So I get in between them and say, 'Dude, this Dude has no problem'. Black Jesus says, 'Thanks, Blessed Child! Thanks, Blessed Child!' He treated me special, you know, because I was the one who brought him here. Black Jesus says, 'Thanks Blessed Child! Thank you for keeping me from stabbing this dude'.

#### **Act 4 - The Uber Driver from Hell**

Alright! Remember how I told you about the night before, that, I went to his friend's house it seemed kind of normal and he had his girl. The girl he was talking to staying at his friend's house. Later on that night, I and Charlie Manson look-a-like, go to his house. We go to this guy's house because Manson lookalike is actually trying to find a place, too.

And we're in the garage and he's being disrespectful to this dude who was in the US Navy, too. He's like talking disrespectfully to him. Talking respectfully to me. But he's talking disrespectfully basically to everyone else around me. It was kind of weird...and he was drunk, too. My buddy from work is just...agreeing with him and just trying to get to the point and get out.

Out of nowhere, this guy calls the cops on his buddy with the girl... and he tells us to stay right there for it and he starts falsely accusing his friend who he worked with at Best Buy and that I found out he's delusional and that he had a drinking problem. He starts falsely accusing this guy of raping the chick that he was talking to who he had left at the house.

I said, 'we need to get out of here!' But Charlie quickly leaves first and takes off. I said, 'Damn. I'm going to have deal with this guy for literally the next half an hour.'

I told Black Jesus, 'Dude, I'm just going to call an Uber. I have to go to sleep.' and he said, 'I'll call you tomorrow, man, to see whats up!'

That was an Uber Driver from hell. Never read a story about how the Marine Corps was started and think that a coincidence happens. ■





Photo By Logan Weaver



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