

# englishist

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# Editorial



**Lev Pavlovski & Žan Korošec**

**Editors-in-Chief, Co-designers, Co-editors of *Scholar's Summary***

Dear reader, if you manage to endure the splendour of our visages, the XVII issue will reveal what students of English have pondered about over the course of this year. Some columns are profoundly intricate, earnestly formulated, thus maintaining the tradition of academic prose. Others feature delightful inscriptions and comic verses, whilst a segment is dedicated to relentless critiques and reflections. Whatever your preference may be, the following pages can satisfy even the most onerous demands. And I entrust Lev to bestow upon you a more sumptuous depiction.

Since the dawn of civilization,  
man and woman alike have battled  
with the invincible mistress that is  
the English notation.

From witty rhyming to finding that perfect story's  
silver lining,  
many a hero and heroine have tried, some failed,  
some have succeeded and to this day are  
wholesaled.

But none are as brave as the dozen or more,  
who dared to bedazzle us in this year's ENgLIST  
galore.  
We present to you thusly a selection of best,  
to put your minds, hearts and souls to the ultimate  
test.

Interviews, stories and poems by our students were  
written,  
to celebrate the gorgeous speech of the Brexiteering  
Great Britain.

A poet, judging by my verse, I am not,  
so I shall bring this intro to a dignified stop.

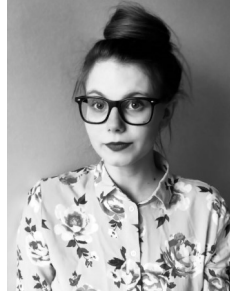
If you like what we do and want to sign on,  
why not give it a go with your own lexicon?  
Join us next time with your wordy invention.  
To publish it in here is our dearest intention!



**Maša Rebernik**  
**Proofreader-in-chief**

*Dust if you must, but the world's out there,  
 With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your  
 hair,  
 A flutter of snow, a shower of rain.  
 This day will not come 'round again.*

Rose Miligan



**Nisja Naja Resinovič**  
**Tutoring Community Liaison, Pre-  
 sentation Leader and Co-editor of  
 Language Love**

*"Fairy tales are more than true: not because  
 they tell us that dragons exist, but because  
 they tell us that dragons can be beaten."*

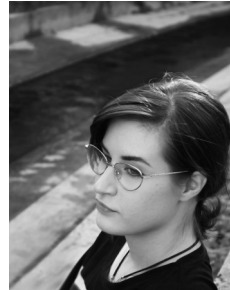
Neil Gaiman



**Zala Jambrović Hatić**  
**Foreign Correspondence Overseer,  
 Main Seeker of Contributions and  
 Co-editor of Language Love**

*"They can keep their heaven. When I die, I'd  
 sooner go to Middle Earth."*

George R. R. Martin



**Korina Rožman**  
**Cover Art Designer**

*"Godzilla is my father figure."*



**Mikec Veronika**  
**Co-editor of Language Love**

*"Those who have a voice must speak for  
 those who are voiceless."*

O. Romero



**Karin Petko**  
**Co-editor of Poetry Paradise**

*"Life is short, but a smile only takes a  
 second."*



**Ariela Herček**  
**Co-editor of Poetry Paradise**

*"There are poets who sing you to sleep and  
 poets who ready you for war and I want to  
 be both."*

Ashe Vernon



**Luka Kržišnik**  
**Co-editor of Poetry Paradise**

*"Always there for you, about 20 minutes  
 later."*



**Marija Jeremić**  
**Co-editor of Writer' Woe**

*"I've had a bad week."  
 "What's happened?"  
 "Nothing's happened. I've had a bad week  
 in my head, is all."*

Nick Hornby, *High Fidelity*



**Anja Zidar**  
**Co-editor of Writer's Woe**

*"Mrs Dalloway said she would buy flowers  
 herself."*

Virginia Woolf



**Lara Zombra**  
**Co-editor of Writer's Woe**

*"When life gives you lemons, make  
 lemonade."*



**Žiga Fabjan**  
**Co-editor of Opulent Opinions**

*"If liberty means anything at all, it means  
 the right to tell people what they do not  
 want to hear."*

George Orwell



**Maja Perne**

**Co-editor of *Opulent Opinions***

*"It is no measure of health to be well adjusted to a profoundly sick society."*

Jiddu Krishnamurti



**Andrej Podobnik**

**Co-editor of *Opulent Opinions***

*"Always borrow money from a pessimist. He won't expect it back."*

Oscar Wilde



**Janja Bevk**

**Co-editor of *Fruitful Film Findings***

*"With freedom, books, flowers and the moon, who could not be happy?"*

Oscar Wilde



**Katarina Penko**

**Co-editor of *Fruitful Film Findings***

*"There are easy ways to bring back summer in the snowstorm."*

André Acimen



**Jure Pirtovšek**

**Co-editor of *Fruitful Film Findings***

*"I'm desperately trying to figure out why Kamikaze pilots wore helmets."*

George Carlin



**Živa Dekleva**

**Co-editor of *Exuberant Exchanges of Travel Tales***

*"For broken dreams the cure is, dream again; and deeper."*

C. S. Lewis



**Lara Majerle**

**Co-editor of *Exuberant Exchanges of Travel Tales***

*"Dea-fhortún, léitheoir de ENgLIST."*



**Eva Turk**

**Co-editor of *Exuberant Exchanges of Travel Tales***

*"Nothing is impossible, the world itself says, 'I'm possible'."*

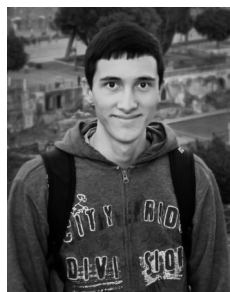
Audrey Hepburn



**Leja Dvoršek**

**Maker of *Crossword Conundrum***

*"I may be useless but I certainly ain't useful."*



**Jure Plut**

**Design Department Intern**

*"Everywhere I go I'm asked if I think the university stifles writers. My opinion is that they don't stifle enough of them. There's many a best-seller that could have been prevented by a good teacher."*

Flannery O'Connor

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# Scholar's Summary

## Teaching American Poetry in Ljubljana in the Time of Trump

by Dr. James M. Sutton

From February – July 2017, I lived and worked in Slovenia. I resided in Ljubljana, accompanied by my 15-year old son. I came to Slovenia intending to teach a first-year MA course on Shakespeare (my specialty) at the University of Maribor, while my son would complete 9th grade at a small international school in Ljubljana. In addition, the two of us, father and son, planned to travel extensively throughout Slovenia, Italy and central Europe during our first four months, as his schooling and my teaching permitted. We would be joined in Ljubljana by my wife and 12-year old son in early June, and as a family of four, our travels around Slovenia and nearby countries would continue.

All of these plans were realized. But, along the way, much that was unexpected occurred. We made many wonderful new friends; I had an emergency surgery in Celje and spent three days in hospital there; I taught *Romeo and Juliet* to my son and his classmates, and spoke to 8th and 9th graders at three separate osnovna sola about life in America; I partied with relatives and friends; I came to “feel Slovenia,” even though the language continued to mostly baffle me. And perhaps most unexpectedly, and most delightfully, I ended up teaching a tiny seminar at the University of Ljubljana surveying American poetry, literature that I had not studied for 30 years, since my own undergraduate education. I came to Slovenia wishing, for a time, to escape my divided, embittered, angry homeland; I left Miami precisely one week after President Trump had evoked “this American carnage” in his inaugural address. But what we seek to evade frequently rematerializes in an unforeseen guise: the seminar on American poetry gave me the opportunity to engage afresh, alongside seven students, with the messy yet beautiful tapestry of American words and democratic ideals...a course of study initiated by Anne Bradstreet’s puritan evocations and concluding with Richard Blanco’s 2013 inaugural poem, “One Today,” presenting a more optimistic view of America than that undergirding President Trump’s vision of a decrepit America needing him to be “made great again.”

In what follows, I will first explain how an American professor whose career revolves around the English Renaissance and Shakespeare ended up on sabbatical in Slovenia. I will then offer some general observations about Slovenia, stemming entirely from my own experiences, encounters and travels. Finally, I will reflect on the American poetry class I taught at the University of Ljubljana. In the divisive dawn of the Trump era, the encounter between

the Slovene and American worlds embodied within this course reimagined what the “marriage” of our countries might entail, countering the conjunction of Donald and Melania.

### Why Slovenia?

For 23 years, since receiving my Ph.D. (Yale, 1995) in Renaissance Studies, I have been teaching and conducting my scholarly work primarily in Miami, at Florida International University (FIU). My teaching has centered on Shakespeare, Spenser, and other English Renaissance authors. I have taught courses in the “wider” Renaissance, but these followed the “western” trajectory that begins in Italy, heads north through France and the Low Countries, and then crosses the channel to England. My familiarity with the central European Renaissance, stretching geographically from Dubrovnik through your Slavic lands and on to Budapest, Vienna, and Prague, has been passing at best, limited to acquaintance with Renaissance architecture and urbanism “east” of Italy. My professional and academic travels mirror these interests: between 1988 and 2016, I traveled to either England or Italy numerous times. Finally, to date, my publications all pertain to the English Renaissance generally, and Elizabethan and Jacobean culture more particularly.

From August 2008 – August 2016, I served as chairperson of the very large English department at FIU, a unit incorporating programs and faculty in literature, linguistics, writing and composition, and creative writing. With 60+ full-time faculty, numerous adjunct faculty, and more than 1000 registered BA, MA and MFA students at any time, leading this unit proved an all-consuming administrative challenge, leaving me scant time to work on my teaching, and even less opportunity to develop, let alone sustain, research interests. Knowing that I would complete my tenure as chair in August 2016, and cognizant too that I would then receive at least one semester, if not a whole academic year, of sabbatical leave in the 2016/2017 academic year, I began as early as spring 2016 to make plans for my year away from FIU. Mindful that my time as chair had taken me too far from historicist, archival work in the English Renaissance, I decided to yoke my many years of teaching Shakespeare in Miami, to relatively new directions in Shakespeare studies, including “presentist” Shakespeare, global/local Shakespeares, and questions of race and identity in the plays. Thus I settled upon a new scholarly project, a study of

Shakespearean performance, education, and appropriation in Miami.

Still, none of these interests remotely predict that I would choose to live and work in Slovenia for the first half of 2017. Based upon the above, hunkering down in Miami and/or travelling in the U.S. and England seems more predictable. However, considering the common everyday meaning of the word “leave,” and recalling the origins of the word “sabbatical” in “Sabbath,” a time of rest and cessation of labor, my choice of Slovenia—the peaceful, quiet, green heart of Europe — begins to make more sense. After eight years as a University administrator, mired in the demands of keeping my department on track and moving forward, I needed to leave Miami for a suitable resting place where I could cease these labors. As a place for such “repose,” I could not think of a better spot, a sweeter locale, than Slovenia.

I did not choose Slovenia “sight unseen,” however: I already knew the country, having travelled there on numerous occasions, but for personal rather than professional reasons. I am born of American and Canadian parents, and to the third generations I can trace French-Canadian, Scottish, English and Germanic roots; I cannot claim a drop of Slovenian, yet alone Slavic, blood. My wife of many years, however, is 100% Slovenian-American, born in Chicago in the 1960s to parents who left Slovenia in the 1950s for U.S. Her father was born in the village of Drasici, near Metlika, and her mother hails from Celje. Her family, both immediate and extended, embraces their Slovene heritage, culture, traditions, and language. And thus, either with my wife, or with her family, or with her and my two sons (both of them 50% Slovene), I had travelled to Yugoslavia in March 1989 and to Slovenia in 1997, 2006, 2011, and 2016—each time for at least one week, and sometimes for two weeks. Though these visits centered on re-connecting with family in Celje and in Bela Krajina, I had also toured the country’s major attractions, and had familiarity with both Ljubljana and Maribor. Hence, choosing Slovenia as the location for my sabbatical in 2016/2017 was, in no manner, done blindly.

Early in 2016, I wrote to the heads of the English departments at both UL and the University of Maribor, expressing interest in obtaining an appointment at either institutions. Maribor responded quickly and enthusiastically; my willingness to teach Shakespeare matched their needs well for the winter/spring 2017 term. Although UL then responded negatively, the commitment from Maribor’s faculty was all I required to begin making plans for a six-month sabbatical in Slovenia in the winter and spring of 2017.

#### General Observations and Reflections on Living in Slovenia

Spending six months in Slovenia did not afford anything close to a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of your country, but in both my daily life in Ljubljana, and my extensive travels throughout the country, especially to and from Maribor, I did observe and experience many aspects of Slovenian culture and life that I found very attractive. Much of the charm lies in sharp distinctions between life in Slovenia and the daily routines and

rhythms of my life in South Florida. I must admit from the outset, though, that one trend I do find worrying, is the increasing Americanization of your country. The newly opened McDonalds in Celje is emblematic: located less than ½ a kilometer south of the A1 on Mariborska cesta, replete with a drive-through window and American-style landscaping, this is, as I see it, an ugly American intrusion into your country. Similarly, though many in Ljubljana seem to love BTC and Rudnik, I found these malls just as unattractive and unappealing as are the shopping centers that blot our American urban landscape. I don’t think I will ever forget walking into the Bauhaus in BTC and thinking to myself, “this is precisely a Home Depot, even down to the layout, shelving and orange color scheme, except that here all the signage and labels are in Slovenian instead of English.”

One of the best aspects of Slovenia, for me at least, was its small geographical size, especially in the context of Florida and the U.S. Here’s a really simple way of visualizing the difference between living in a small country in the center of Europe and living at the southern tip of a long peninsula that is itself part of a southern state at the southeast corner of a vast country. In Ljubljana, I thought nothing of driving to any corner of your country, and beyond, in a single day. Day-trips to Maribor were especially frequent, but I thought nothing of driving to Piran and back, or to the Soca Valley, or to Metlika, or even Prekmurje, in one day. In Florida, for the first time in twenty-one years, I recently drove out of state, 800 miles from Miami to eastern Tennessee, and I did so not for pleasure, but in order to evacuate my family due to Hurricane Irma. Distances in Slovenia are small, and thus the country feels very “doable,” very “knowable.” In six months, I became familiar with numerous corners of Slovenia, and I still frequently and fondly recall many gorgeous vistas. On the other hand, although I’ve lived for 23 years in Florida, much of the state remains “undiscovered country”; and on a grander scale, despite being an American citizen for 54 years, most of the famed western landmarks (the Grand Canyon, Las Vegas, the southwestern deserts, Yosemite and “old Faithful”) are still, for me, sights unseen. For all the rhetoric about America’s greatness being wrapped up in its vastness and its variety, that very spaciousness makes comprehending the country problematic. This is not an issue for Slovenia, whose small size should be celebrated, not belittled.

Despite its tininess, your country has incredible physical diversity, and this too should be considered an asset. Other countries, the US included, boast mountains and mountain plateaus, sea-coasts, karstic regions dotted with incredible cave structures and underground rivers, and vast plains—but manifesting all four geo-scapes in such a small area is astounding, especially for a resident of Miami, where flatness and water are pervasive. If I drive, or take a boat, 100 miles in any direction, I’ll still be in a landscape defined by smooth watery planes, and my change in elevation will be measured in a few feet—ten or fifteen at most. So living in Ljubljana was joyous, since even a trip of just 15 miles lead to extraordinarily diverse landscapes, from the barje in the south to the mountains and hill ridges west and north of the city.

I also must compliment Slovenia for its hospitality and graciousness. Although several books about Slovenia claim you are a reserved and cautious people, I did not find this to be the case, either at the two universities I frequented, or in the wider community. Although I did enjoy the “advantage” of a circle of relatives to begin, I made numerous new friends, and felt welcome and accepted. In fact, as our time in Slovenia wound down, we had too many invitations to choose from, and we departed with many a “rain-check.” In Ljubljana, my son and I were “adopted” by a local family with whom we visited more often than I can keep track, and who over the course of six months, became most dear to us. Other friends, both from his school and from other circles, kept us busy socially. I hope to return the hospitality here in Miami, soon.

I love how food and drink define so many of your social interactions, and I appreciate the manner in which lingering over a table, amidst fine or witty conversation, is prized. In the United States, we rush about; lunch is usually a timed affair, and “having coffee” typically means walking over to the local Starbucks, getting your cup, and returning to work, all within 15 minutes. The European or Slovenian-style coffee, taken at a street café (Le Petit Café springs to mind!) with a friend or colleague or students, and lasting at least an hour or two: this is far preferable. Similarly attractive is the weekend meal in the vineyard *zidanca* or the alpine cabin, begun in the mid-afternoon and lasting well into the evening. And who wouldn't adore the traditions of the *koca* and the *kmetija*, hospitality spread from the mountain-top to the “tourist farm” below?

I admire Slovenians' love of the outdoors and the good health to be obtained there, whether in skiing, hiking, bicycling, swimming, rafting, or hang-gliding. The catchphrase I heard so often on Radio SI to describe the country—“green, healthy, active”—seems apt, and I know I departed in July healthier than in January—even though I did not ski anywhere, nor raft down the Soca, nor climb to the top of Triglav. All these remain for my next extended visit.

When I do next visit, I hope to find your country unchanged—and this includes one special feature. Your slice of paradise “on the sunny side of the Alps” remains comparatively undiscovered. It is not yet on the “tourist map” of most Americans, nor the Chinese and Japanese, nor other Europeans—this is very good. Admittedly, attractions like Lake Bled, Postojnska jama, and even Ljubljana become busier in the spring and summer, yet increased tourism can be as much a curse as it is a blessing. Let me put it this way: from my experience, your attractions and major cities are far less crowded than other European sites, places such as Dubrovnik and the Croatian islands, or the bustling cities like Budapest, Vienna and Prague. Your country is not yet considered a “must-see” for the foreign traveler, and the longer this remains true, the better. This past summer, after rubbing elbows with millions of other visitors from the U.S., Canada, and Asia in Venice, Kotor and Prague, returning to relatively calm, quiet Ljubljana always felt like a most welcome arrival “home.” So, pace the Slovenian tourist board, and your

office of economic development, I hope that the number of people who “feel Slovenia” remains limited. Thus, while I'll tell many about the wonders of your “green heart” of Europe, I hope, for the sake of Piran, Pokljuka, Velika Planina, Pohorje, Ptuj and Prekmurje, that my acclamations go unheeded. Let my fellow Americans continue to crowd Italy, Austria, Budapest and Dubrovnik, as I slip quietly back to tranquil Slovenia.

#### American Poetry meets Aškerčeva cesta

When I first arrived in Ljubljana last January, I had no intention to teach at UL. However, I reached out to the department to investigate possible collaborations and affiliations, and within two weeks, I was having coffee with Dr. Igor Maver. He told me by e-mail that he had a class he wished to discuss, and assuming this would be a course on Shakespeare or Renaissance literature, I happily agreed to meet. After exchanging greetings, he made his offer: he needed a seminar on American poetry staffed; it would be a small course, low-stakes, meeting just once weekly. Hemming, I replied politely that this was not my field, I'd never taught or studied this poetry carefully, and thus I was uncertain about the class. He insisted optimistically that, since I was an American, a native-speaker, and well-versed in English Renaissance poetry, I was perfect. He seemed so confident in my abilities, and so generous in his manner, that I quickly acceded—within a fortnight of my arrival, I was hired to teach the spring 2017 American poetry seminar, which Dr. Maver explained, would continue a similar course taught in fall 2016. It would meet once weekly, there would be few students, and I could do as I pleased in terms of syllabus and course design.

The resulting course was simple in terms of its design and outcomes, but very distinct and perhaps unsettling in terms of its execution—the pedagogical method it incorporated—for my seven students, and for me too. The syllabus embodied nothing more, or less, than a historical survey of American poetry, in the true sense of the word, “survey,” that is, a view from far above, intending to capture broad patterns and thematic concerns in the poetry but making few if any specific and substantial claims about particular poems or poets. Over the course of 12 weeks (March 1 – May 31), we read and discussed colonial, revolutionary, and antebellum poetry; dedicated one week each to the three major 19th century poets—Poe, Whitman and Dickinson; considered major authors of the later 19th and early 20th centuries; and concluded by looking at the incredible flowering of American poetry from about 1950 up to the contemporary moment. In our very last class in late May, I brought “Miami” and “Florida” to Ljubljana in poems written by FIU colleagues Campbell McGrath and Denise Duhamel, and also penned by the aforementioned Richard Blanco, trained at FIU and now nationally prominent.

My expectations for the seven students enrolled in the class were also, on the surface, simple and very straightforward. Each week, before we met, I asked them to read about 15-20 assigned poems, and to prepare them



for class discussion. They also wrote one paper for the course, plus a final examination. Thus, in terms of its design, there was absolutely nothing exceptional about this American poetry class.

The big surprise for me, however, was that the class forced me to engage with my homeland—its history, ideologies, experiments both grand and failed, its diverse geographies and climates and peoples, its varied verbal textures and ever-changing rhythms of voice and diction—during a sabatical that had been specifically intended to promote disengagement from the US. Everywhere I went in Slovenia, including your grammar schools, everyone wanted to talk about America, watch our films, listen to our music. The seminar on American poetry allowed me to confront this paradoxical problem of America's global reach, to think about it and examine it, to grapple with it honestly and in a personal manner. In reality, my Wednesdays in Ljubljana became a personal inquiry into what it meant to be an American living abroad with my son in the homeland of my in-laws, the country my wife claims as native soil. So, after dropping my son off at school, I'd head back to my apartment in Kodeljevo, make my morning coffee, and settle in for three or four hours quietly reading and taking notes on the "poems for the day." Always intensely stirred by at least a few of the works, I'd then drive over to Aškerčeva cesta to make some last preparations for class. After a few minutes in Dr. Maver's office, at 14:40 I'd walk into FF Room 302, and class would begin.

From the outset of the course, I made it clear to my group of seven students—six Slovenes and one Erasmus student from France—that, since I could claim little true expertise in American poetry, they were going to have to own this seminar and participate thoroughly in their learning. The manner in which the class unfolded was therefore truly simple, but perhaps very unnerving—at least at first—for the students. Each student had to choose one of the assigned poems at the beginning of class. Then, in no particular order, we'd look carefully at each of these selected poems. First, the student would read it aloud, with my ever-growing insistence that they heed attention to all the signals the poem gave them about how to parse through it. I'd happily help out with diction and pronunciation, although as the semester progressed, this became less necessary as each student became more confident and assured in the sounds and rhythms of American verse. And burdened neither with claims of expertise nor aspirations for mastery, the eight of us would begin exploring the poem, teasing out both formal and content-based meanings, craft and theme, figure and ideation. We never rushed this process, and frequently it would take the entire class, all one-hundred minutes, to work through seven poems. More than once, we lost track of time and continued discussing a poem well after 16:20 when we were officially finished—beyond 16:45 or even 16:50, we'd sit together in 302 and continue constructing—and deconstructing—meaning.

Since I entered into the learning as almost an equal partner, I eschewed all the traditional vestiges of classroom authority—itsself a much more American than European teaching practice. All seven students would sit next to each other in one row of desks in FF 302, and I sat facing

them in an adjacent row...not quite a circle of learning, but something approximating an ellipse, perhaps, with its foci being no one individual, but the poems themselves, laying themselves open to our acts of interpretation. I ignored the lectern altogether, unless it was to briefly access the computer in order to bring up another poem, or an image or symbol I felt the verse was calling forth. This paradigm allowed the poems to speak for themselves, and then for the eight of us to work together to speak further about them, of them, and through them. When the need to contextualize arose, I would step in—filling in gaps about geography, history, politics, customs and rituals, waves of immigration, slavery and race and identity, violence, all that is beautiful and ugly about my country—but such moments were driven by the works themselves, not by my own need to demonstrate knowledge or totalizing comprehension, either of America or its verse.

This opportunity to teach this class at UL was an unexpected, unforeseen gift for me. It allowed me from a distance to think through my own fraught sense of American-ness in the first crazy months of the Trump presidency. This humble and quiet work of parsing through my nation's poetry was done literally across the street from where Melania Knavs had studied architecture for one year in the late 1980s, before leaving for Milan to pursue her modelling career, and then onward to New York and Washington DC. Representing precisely the opposite trajectory, from America (back) to Slovenia, my journey to this class opened up new vistas. Through it, I met three wonderful and supportive new colleagues, Drs. Sicherl, Maver and Blake, all three of whom remain close, and with whom I hope to maintain long and rich professional relationships, both in Ljubljana and in Miami (yes, I relish the prospect of returning to Slovenia, and teaching another class or two at UL, and I hope to coax all three colleagues to Miami at some point in the not-too-distant future). The best gift of all, though, that this class afforded endures through the bonds forged between the eight of us involved, the lessons we learned about each other, and about our countries, in the process of reading Wheatley, Whitman, Wallace Stevens, Williams and so many other American poets.

To conclude, I wish to give voice to one of the students in the class; I received the following message just a few weeks ago, on Christmas day, as I was writing this reflective article. Her words articulate beautifully what occurred on Wednesday afternoons in the spring of 2017, in FF 302, as we quietly worked to make some sense of American poetry. She wrote, generously and with heartfelt authenticity:

*Having you at our university for that (short) time has definitely been one of our highlights of 2017; I'm sure all my classmates can agree with this. Not only did we have an absolutely terrific time but you gave us a completely new perspective of what a literature class can look like. And how to approach the study of literature/poetry that isn't merely listing the biography and the works of a writer/poet and then pushing them on our reading list without much further discussion...Even if teaching and discussing American Poetry wasn't something you were used to—and I imagine it was a bit of a challenge finding the right approach to it (especially with such a small class)—the time spent with you not only taught us a lot, but it was also fun - in a way that made us feel the need to do more /.../*

# Translated Poems

## Vitogoj

Alojz Gradnik

1

Čul tožbo sem: da netil sem upor,  
da solnograške in pasavske škofe  
sem žalil, kralja vašega in grofe,  
da sem snoval zaroto in umor

vašega vojvode. Da sem pregnal  
biriče vaše, hlapce in glavarje  
in smešil križe vaše in oltarje,  
da Ljudevitu zbral sem šeststo glav

slovenskih mož. Vse res je, vse je res,  
in treba ni nobenega dokaza,  
vse sam priznavam vam, presvetli knez,

in ne bojim se vašega obraza,  
ne vašega krvnika. In čemu  
sem storil to? Povem vam brez strahu:

2

Kot grabežljive roparice-ptice  
so prišle tolpe vaše v naše kraje,  
oplenile so hiše nam in staje  
in pokončale polja in gorice.

Če smo mrmrali, ste nas bili v lice,  
in če smo terjali nazaj, jokaje,  
kar ste ukradli nam, ste radi vstaje  
metali nas v podzemeljske temnice.

Žene ste nam oskrunili in hčere  
in z njimi ste plodili gnusen rod,  
ki ne pozna več svojega ognjišča,

ki je odpadel od pradedov vere  
in pljuva zdaj že na bogov svetišča,  
zaničevan od vseh, izdajski skot.

5

Pel Triglav, peli bodo vsi vrhovi,  
kjerkoli pasejo se naše črede,  
vse njive, gaji, gozdi, vrtno grede,  
potoki, reke, viri in slapovi.

In nemi peli bodo še grobovi  
in duh, rojen iz naše srčne srede,  
obnavljal bo navade in obrede,  
ki bodo bitja našega sledovi.

In duh budil iz dna grobov bo mrtve:  
»Dovolj trpljenja je, dovolj je žrtve,  
vstanite, prišla ura je osvete!«

In vstale bodo davnih borcev čete:  
za vse kar se je živim naklonilo,  
vam mrtveci prinesejo plačilo!

## Vitogoj

Alojz Gradnik

1

I heard the charge: I stirred up a revolt,  
bemoaned the Salzburg bishops and their sort,  
I scorned your king, the counts who man his court,  
that I contrived a murderous assault

of your Lord Duke. I was the one to ban  
your taxmen, chiefs and farmhands from the state,  
I mocked your altars, the symbols of your faith,  
for Liudewit I raised six hundred men

of Slovene blood. Indeed, I did do so;  
no proof of treason need be brought to light,  
most gracious Prince, I willingly bestow,

my guilt on you, your face does not affright,  
nor does your headsman's sword. And to what end?  
I fearlessly to you explain my stand:

2

Like birds of prey, enraptured by their greed,  
your hordes came rushing to our motherland,  
our plundered homes and stalls now bear their brand,  
the ravished fields and vineyards' barren seed.

For our dissent you beat us with no heed;  
with weeping eyes we asked you to amend  
your many wrongs; with joy you made us stand  
in gaols deep underground for such misdeed.

You have defiled our daughters and our wives  
and bred with them a most repulsive stock;  
a breed which shuns its native hearth and home,

our forbears' faith it spurns and yet still thrives  
and even spits on sacred shrines of stone,  
despised by all, the fallen, faithless flock.

5

The mountains, Triglav, with our song shall ring,  
each glade which feeds our herds with it shall roar,  
each wood and groove, each patch of ground ashore,  
each waterfall, each river, stream and spring.

And even graves shall in their silence sing,  
the spirit birthed of our own heart's core,  
repeat it shall our rites forevermore;  
our traces thus shall be a living thing.

Our heart shall rouse the dead beneath the skies:  
Enough of grief, enough of sacrifice!  
Arise! The hour of vengeance has begun!

And ancient troops of war shall rise as one:  
"The living know the shadow of your sword;  
the dead shall bring to you a just reward."

# Language Love

## A Flower Called Rose

by Vanja Gajić

Some words sound nicer than others. If we refer to the technical explanation used in poetry, this is due to assonance, in other words, due to the fact that vowels sound more melodious than consonants. If we refer to a more psychological explanation it may be due to our mental associations with the semantic meaning of a certain word and the contexts in which we use it. The reason is quite surely a mix of both of these theories. It is hard to imagine a word like »cockroach« used as a loving nickname, much less it carrying as sickly sweet of a connotation as “lubby dubby” does. This is partly connected to the fact that it contains many consonants - going back to non-melodic sounds - but it most certainly also has a lot to do with our negative perception of the animal we call a cockroach. So, in connection with Juliet’s ponderings on the relevance of Romeo’s monicker, yes, theoretically a rose could smell just as sweet bearing any other name, both literally and metaphorically, depending on whether it would hypothetically be called something else from the very start. If we were to rename it now, still having the word “rose” embedded in our vocabulary, the rose, or whatever the thorny red-pink-white-yellow flower would be called, would still smell the same, albeit it might come with an aroma of confusion.

However, it is important to note that humans are not plants. We associate certain names with certain personality traits. The prospect of meeting someone named Noah

might spark up more excitement than going on a date with a Howard. Therefore Romeo wouldn’t quite be the star-crossed lover we know him as if his name was Mike. But then again, when you fall so deeply infatuated with someone that you are prepared to commit suicide for them twice, it must make little difference that their name is Garrett and not something more ethereal like Gabriel. And anyway, if all else fails, any name can be made cuter when you frame it in a sharpie-drawn heart. All though the latter solution might not help out Juliet if her darling decided to follow her directions and change his name to, let’s say, Rod, with regard to the sharpie-less world she inhabited.

But perhaps the better question is whether or not Juliet herself would find Romeo as appealing if he were called something else, considering that the forbidden fruit supposedly tastes (and smells?) the sweetest. If their romance wasn’t as polarising they would probably take a more relaxed approach to it. Perhaps they would even grow bored with each other’s sweet smiles and smells. Perhaps Romeo, were he not a Montague, would seem like the plane option in comparison with some other young chap from the Montague clan. The family conflict that makes Romeo and Juliet’s love impossible is quite probably the thing fuelling it and without it, the whole affair might have stayed a mere crush instead of developing into a crushing, fatal love story.

## It Is High Time I Got a Life

Amateur Research in the Worthy Field of Linguistics

by Maja Ina Ruparčič

“Never shalt thou question the scientific nature of linguistics whilst in the presence of an actual scientist.”

(*Speculative Grammarian*)

We linguists are oft-times confronted with intricate problems that become this worthy field of science. Rather like mathematicians, or physicists – that is what we like to tell ourselves, at least.

I find we prescriptivists are especially prone to making futile attempts to force language to fit into a box, where, naturally, it does not belong. You may have guessed by now that the author is something of a control freak, and does not like ungrammatical deviation in the slightest. The

semi-scientific satirical text you now have before you emerged due to this very defect, and it also attempts to present the results of the research triggered by the pure indignation the author experienced upon encountering the following sentence:

*Therefore, it is about time the Asian community stops looking through rose coloured spectacles.*  
(English Verbs in Use II)

A vigilant eye will have cringed at the employed verbal form; my own instinct for the language rebelled aggressively, of course, as it does every time I hear *will* in subordinate clauses of time and condition used incorrectly. But, being a mere infant in the wood of linguistics, how could I question it without sufficient evidence?

So into extensive study I plunged, starting first with the British National Corpus. Upon confirming such examples indeed existed in other revised texts, I immersed myself into research to discover why that was the case.<sup>1</sup>

Alas, no examined grammar provided a satisfactory explanation, but neither did it directly address the usage of the present tense in such constructions. In *Quirk* (2008) and *Huddleston & Pullum* (2010), for instance, the modal past tenses are prescribed, but only the past subjunctive is considered ungrammatical. Other consulted grammar books (*Blaganje-Konte*) and dictionaries (*Merriam-Webster*, *Longman*), while imposing modal constructions, fail to address any other forms. In fact, the *Cambridge Online Grammar* is the sole source that straightforwardly prohibits the usage of the present tense after *It is (high/about) time*. Similarly, Leech in *Meaning and the English Verb* (1987) prescribes a hypothetical verbal form and marks the examples with the present tense as ungrammatical.

Further analysis of the BNC examples showed that, despite the initial annoyance over the presence of such structures, they proved to be rather infrequent. In fact, out of the 160 hits<sup>2</sup>, only 10 deviated from the prescribed modal past tense usage (being followed by either the present indicative or the present subjunctive), which amounts to 6.25 percent<sup>3</sup> of all examples. As a real scientist would do, I examined and copied them one by one, for I was but a babe in the world of corpora and unversed in more effective techniques. Attempting to deduce some logical explanation from the contextual environments in which the ghastly structures appeared, I estimated it was high time I sought help from a professional.<sup>4</sup>

In the world of academia, showing up to office hours unprepared is probably considered a mortal sin as it is<sup>5</sup>, so I need not stress that I, an overachiever, came heavily armed. After conferring with Professor Ilc<sup>6</sup>, two possible solutions emerged:

- 1) The present seems to appear predominantly in official, formal contexts, such as government statements, and thus conveys a more deontic meaning.

*It is high time that all the elected authorities of the republic originate from the free choice of its citizens.*

- 2) The present tense usage might be on the rise, being less complicated to form and understand than the modal past tenses, due to English being the *lingua franca*.

Professor Ilc was then so kind as to suggest asking a native speaker's opinion on the matter, which resulted in creating a somewhat messier mess than I had anticipated. As a rule, native speakers never agree on anything. I suspected the difference might also have something to do with the regional variants<sup>7</sup>, which resulted in my forming a potential third hypothesis:

- 3) The default use may differ depending on the standard or regional variants of English, while possibly being influenced by either of the two aforementioned factors.

The participants (native speakers of British, American, and Canadian SE<sup>8</sup>) were asked to opt for a tense after *It is high time*, to elaborate on any difference in meaning they might sense between the past and the present, and to think of a context in which to use them.

All but one American speakers chose the present verbal form, and judged the past to be more formal, slightly deontic, and politer. Surprisingly, they also sensed a temporal difference in meaning, the present indicating what one *should do right now* and the past what *should have been done already*. Additionally, one participant suggested that while the present encodes something that will (definitely) happen, the past carries a note of uncertainty (which thankfully proves even Americans are not completely deaf to the notion of counter-factuality with the modal past tenses).

The British were less disappointing in their answers. Three out of six absolutely condemned the present tense usage, but tolerated it when the speaker's intended message was that of a command or a forceful suggestion, i. e. deontic<sup>9</sup>. The rest had succumbed to the toxic Yankee influence and reluctantly admitted sensing a temporal distinction between the two forms, despite believing the past to be more frequently used.

While Canadian speakers mostly opted for the past, one participant's answers proved more diverse. In addition to the temporal difference and the present being more forceful, she also estimated it to be somewhat colloquial, and suggested the use of the past progressive to stress the deontic meaning.

Upon extending the research to the Corpus of Contempo-

<sup>1</sup> You might be shaking your head incredulously by now; I could have just let it go.

<sup>2</sup> Excluding non-finite constructions, contracted versions, syncretised verbal forms, and forms with ambiguous subjects.

<sup>3</sup> As you can observe, indicating percentages makes a text appear more scientific, and tricks the reader into believing the author knows what they are talking about.

<sup>4</sup> A linguist, not a psychiatrist.

<sup>5</sup> As is using a mixture of RP and GA (instead of consistently following one single pronunciation) at the Faculty of Arts.

<sup>6</sup> I can hardly claim all the credit.

<sup>7</sup> A theory I approached without any prejudice whatsoever to American English.

<sup>8</sup> Only sixteen of them, but this is ENGLIST, not ELOPE.

<sup>9</sup> Interestingly (but not surprisingly), the British and the Americans have found yet another thing on which to disagree.

rary American English and applying the same criteria as for the BNC, a surprisingly high number of examples with the present tense stood out. Let us compare, for instance, the frequency of the present tense occurrences after the collocation *It is high time*:

BNC: 3 out of 34 (8.82%)

COCA: 30 out of 63 (47.62%)

What with the present tense being five times more common in American than in British corpora, and the discrepancy in the participants' opinions, it is reasonable to conclude that this eyesore of a construction seems to be on the rise particularly in the US<sup>10</sup>, where the modal past tense is beginning to lose its primary modal meaning. However, in this particular collocation, the present seems to be acquiring the notion of a directive, so while the change could be labelled as an instance of grammaticalisation, I will be so bold as to classify the second as a weak example of its (in this case) reverse process, modalisation. To a certain extent, this supports our first hypothesis without actually designating its cause. In a way, the evidence concerning the convergent change in American and British English can be considered the driving force behind this

phenomenon, but it is impossible to state with certainty what triggered the process, despite the plausibility of our second assumption.

That languages evolve is a tale as old as time. In this particular case, more deserving linguists will now plant and harvest where I have ploughed; I shall take the moral highroad and let them reap the fruits of my toil. Meanwhile, I should probably consider switching to descriptivism<sup>11</sup>, but that is, like my getting a life, a different story.

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<sup>10</sup> I will not elaborate on the potential link between this fact and our second hypothesis.

<sup>11</sup> Which is, ironically, what I was forced to do in this article.

## The Night Sky

by Arianna Posega

10:21 p.m.

My to-do list has been completed, I checked off everything on it and I'm now sitting at my desk with a cup of warm fruit tea in my hand and a black pen in the other, trying to write in my journal as I sip my still burning hot tea. Everything has gotten silent, I can hear only the crickets outside and the repetitive ticking of my clock, counting away the minutes, reminding me that it's getting late. The sky has gotten almost completely dark, but you can still recognize a burning hot red line in the middle, reminding you of the sunset that has now faded away, but was there just a few moments ago.

I finally figure out that I'll have to let my tea cool down and I carefully place my cup on a flower-engraved plate and walk up to the window. I open it, let the fresh air meet my face and feel the light breeze in my hair. The moon is glowing, it almost looks like it's the afternoon, since so much light is emanating from this big celestial body. I can distinctly see everything around me, almost. The night looks beautiful. I look back up, this time not facing the Moon, but trying to find the constellations. When I was still a kid I'd always do this and I had no trouble finding *Ursa Major*, also known as *the Great Bear*, and *Ursa Minor*, *the Little Bear*. I'd always point my index finger toward the sky and shout: Look there! I found it! to my mom and dad. The night sky was always so special to me.

Maybe it's the vibe of the night, the fact that you are already feeling a little tired and your eyes are shutting, or because the night somehow makes you feel more secure, almost invisible, covering you in its darkness and dim light. But there's something about the night sky that never ceases to amaze me: the glowing stars that are covering most of the immense black canvas above us on some nights and are barely visible on others. The silence surrounding you. You can only hear yourself breathing slowly – exhaling and inhaling – the chilly night air and nothing else around you. Just you, the Moon and the night sky above you.

What is so unique about the night sky is the fact that it is different every single night. You could sit on your bedroom windowsill and look out, lift your head up to the sky, every night, yet you'd never see the same. There's always going to be a new little star shining from the distance, the Moon is either growing or becoming less and less visible. Yet, never the same. Always different.

And so while you're sitting outside or on your comfy, faded yellow bed sheets, in the silence of your bedroom, with your head lifted up to the sky, with your eyes glowing with the brightness of the Moon, you have to remember that everything changes, nothing stays the same. And just like the night sky you admire every night, before you close your eyes, just like the night sky can change, so can you.

# Opulent Opinions

## In Defence of the Beautiful Game — Why Terry Eagleton Had Better Stuck to Literary Theory

by Matjaž Zgonc



14

It isn't difficult to procure a number of valid points why modern-day football is either obscene or unsatisfactory, or both, what with player power concentrated in the hands of often ridiculously entitled individuals, the increasing influence of the sport's sponsors over ever-larger number of areas of consumption, or the fact that a match or two are on practically every day – which renders being a fan up to date with their beloved club even more time-consuming that it has been prior to around 2010. Around that time, Terry Eagleton, known to the Department of English as that exhaustive (if verbose at times) literary critic every professor of literature quotes, decided to voice his opinion about the sport in *The Guardian*, just in time before the World Cup in the South African Republic began.

Well, not really about the sport itself – it was perhaps unbeknownst to him a critique of watching football instead. “[A] dear friend to capitalism<sup>1</sup>”, he calls the act, stating how “every right-wing think tank” would come up with football as the best way to prevent people from achieving class consciousness. “Modern societies deny men and women the experience of solidarity, which football provides to the point of collective delirium”, he continues, his vitriol reserves seemingly infinite. “Like some austere religious faith, the game determines what you wear, whom you associate with, what anthems you sing and what shrine of transcendent truth you worship at,” he goes on about the victims of ideological manipulation, concluding

with “for the most part football these days is the opium of the people, not to speak of their crack cocaine”.

Football can in fact create powerful emotion. At times, it is strong enough to override identity politics which have plunged a country into civil war<sup>2</sup>; at another time, it may do the exact opposite and act as a trigger for a war between two countries to break out<sup>3</sup>. But whenever Eagleton tries to be exhaustive, he produces a piece reeking of accusations of conspiracy. Whenever he tries to be precise, he ends up with flamboyant purple prose whose vocabulary is more esteemed than its substance. Put simply: football deserves a better critique, not just because Eagleton's is built on ivory foundations, but also because it misses the point. This last accusation holds true also for Dave Zirin<sup>4</sup>, who tried to expose the flaws in Eagleton's piece in the same medium but did so while referring to “the essence of football”, which is unfortunately a referent with an imaginary signified.

Let us begin where Eagleton has wrapped up: with the “opium of the people”. As a seasoned Marxist, Eagleton should be familiar with the quote by the man himself, nowadays available as a graffiti piece found wherever high concentrations of high school students tend to congregate. However, this piece does not do justice to the quote. To understand why, we must acknowledge its immediate context as well.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2010/jun/15/football-socialism-crack-cocaine-people>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/footballrebels/2013/03/201336105035488821.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.thoughtco.com/latin-america-the-football-war-2360853>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/cifamerica/2010/jun/21/football-terry-eagleton-sport>

The struggle against religion is, therefore, indirectly the struggle *against that world* whose spiritual *aroma* is religion. Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the *expression* of real suffering and a *protest* against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the *opium* of the people. The abolition of religion as the *illusory* happiness of the people is the demand for their *real* happiness. To call on them to give up their illusions about their condition is to call on them *to give up a condition that requires illusions*. The criticism of religion is, therefore, *in embryo, the criticism of that vale of tears* of which religion is the *halo*<sup>5</sup>.

Unfortunately for both himself and the reader, Eagleton, as do so many alongside him, switches the cause and effect when it comes to religion and Marxism. It is not so that the religion *produces* the oppression and the illusion. It is precisely the answer to the previously existing oppression, stemming from the *realm of the material*, as is the case with everything Marx has ever written. It should come as no surprise that watching football has existed prior to neoliberal capitalism in both the centre of the capitalist system and its periphery, where this act had many different effects, among which resistance to fascism is but one. I shall return to this below.

One of Eagleton's main tropes is his insistence that football prevents the masses from occupying themselves with what is their objective interest. Being familiar with the current affairs in top-tier football, I do not at all oppose such a view. What needs to be put forth, however, is the sanctimony which constitutes Eagleton's writing. For is proclaiming watching football to be the main proponent for the mystification of actual state of affairs, even the *optimal* proponent for neoliberal ideology, not causing the *exact same* thing to happen? By fixating on watching football, Eagleton diverts attention from what is actually responsible for epidemic passivity and reception of all circuses with no bread. It is of utmost importance to discuss what the causes are, but this essay is no place for that.

What this essay can and must do is act as a trailblazer for a more pungent critique of modern-day football, which must also not be separate from the critique of watching football, another inadequacy Eagleton is guilty of. By taking into account the socio-historical circumstances in which the game was played and watched, one may anatomize football (the game and its reception) in different times and places, revealing different semiologies. Mussolini's obsession with football is well-documented, for example<sup>6</sup>. The Italian national team under the fascist reign reflected the properties of *duce's* ideal subject who was both Italian and male: defensive solidity, combativeness, willingness to never give up and fight to the death.

The manager, Vittorio Pozzo, implemented these ideas into the style of play, and the spectators would both see their

national pride increased and subsequently internalize the values conveyed by the game. However, it is clear as day that these values *did not originate* from the game itself – the game was merely influenced by the regime, and in turn helped solidify the regime. Compare this with Eagleton's grand conspiracy, if you will. Another two examples from history pertain to Francoist Spain. People who have read Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia* will undoubtedly know the significance of Barcelona for the anti-fascist movement. General Franco<sup>7</sup> was well aware of that: the regime would support loyalist clubs financially and have relevant authorities target those who symbolized the resistance. Today, the most obvious consequence of these struggles is the rivalry between (F.C.) Barcelona and Real Madrid (C.F.), to which I shall shortly return, but one must not overlook the symbolic gesture of Basque separatism when Athletic Club Bilbao and Real Sociedad carried the Basque flag to the pitch in 1976, a year after Franco died<sup>8</sup>. This must be understood not only as a manifestation of nationalism, but also an act of resistance.

Not to dwell on the past for too long: the history of football as either fascist or anti-fascist (occasionally acting as centres for working-class activities: the coalition Livorno-Marseille-AEK is the most well-known example of that) hubs is hardly relevant anymore. Eagleton, too, laments that, but in an inadequate manner. The meaning produced by victories of certain clubs over their historical rivals has been reduced to one-dimensional notion of success. Put simply: nowadays, the histories of Barcelona and Real Madrid as anti-fascist and loyalist are by and large forgotten.

What happened to football during the period I would humbly propose to fit into the beginning of the Cruyff era is roughly equivalent to what happened to music with the invention and the spread of vinyl<sup>9</sup> (and the spread of CDs and the like): the fans, the managers, the players, and the owners started to demand equal iterations of virtuosity ending in commercial success. How does this translate to football (mind you, we need to think the game and the watching together)? It is perhaps best summarized by the ongoing Ronaldo/Messi debate: they both represent a type of incredibly able player, their output is largely equal (resulting in the Ballon d'Or every season for either one of them), but the clubs they represent have been equalized as well. In other words, playing for Real Madrid is no longer loyalist, playing for Barcelona is no longer anti-fascist – one of the superstars is simply "better". There is no substantial difference between the two, they represent nothing else but success on and off the pitch.

This is what I mean when I label them one-dimensional: success at all costs (quite literally). And this is where the critique of football finally connects with the critique of the prevalent ideology of the times: I don't think I am very far off when I claim that *competence*, the ability to turn investment into capital, has been subsuming most fields of human activity for the last 15 years. The relevance of any

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1843/critique-hpr/intro.htm>

<sup>6</sup> <https://thesefootballtimes.co/2015/07/20/the-relationship-between-mussolini-and-calcio/>

<sup>7</sup> <http://outsideoftheboot.com/2014/05/22/fascism-football-the-political-history-of-spanish-football/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://thesefootballtimes.co/2016/02/19/how-a-basque-derby-brought-about-the-legalisation-of-the-basque-flag/>

<sup>9</sup> Chanan, M. 1995. *Repeated Takes: A Short History of Recording and its Effects on Music*. New York City, NY: Verso.

object or activity is judged merely by its competence, and this includes work, education, belonging, even nationalism (see the aftermath of Slovenia's basketball gold, for example). Looking at football leagues across Europe, especially the top-tier ones, unveils in this light a specific image of late capitalism: a number of teams which differ from one another in nothing but the amount of investment. Those with less affluent owners (however deluded this may sound) are struggling desperately not to fail and get relegated which would lose them a huge amount of profit. Hence, they defend desperately for as long as they can. "Parking the bus" and counter-attacking have become the prevalent strategies across leagues, countries, even continents. Near the top of the table, the tactics are much more diverse, and yet, as is most blatantly obvious in the case of the two Spanish giants, what remains of the battle on the pitch which used to be at least to an extent politically charged is the more or less watered down version of that where the only remaining differentiating factor is victory or defeat. Success is nothing more than the ability to be the best investment. Which is why another fact should come as no surprise: that it happens less and less often that we witness a surprise victory of a team which, according to the investment numbers, should be a complete outsider.

Where, then, lies the future of the beautiful game? Some have resorted to idolizing Leicester City's one-of-a-kind run in the 2015-16 edition of the Premier League. This, like trying to master RP intonation, seems like surrendering to perpetual disappointment. Others follow clubs whose connection with the community is reminiscent of the game's pre-globalization beginnings, such as F.C. Saint Pauli. This is a viable strategy of calming one's consumer consciousness, but is global support from a horde of football hipsters not what destroyed in the first place the intentions of the clubs intending to be involved exclusively locally? The third option is to reject the global game and focus instead on one's local club. However, following only local clubs has a fundamental flaw utterly conspicuous to all fans of the top clubs: at the local levels, the football is *shit*. No two ways about it, unfortunately. Perhaps what is best done is being alert to the far-reaching consequences of the ideology of competence while we enjoy flashes of brilliance seldom, but still, produced on the field. Changing football, and this is the final nail in the coffin of Eagleton's career as a football analyst, will not change the world

## Culturally Shocked

by SJ

I have never been fond of the expression 'culture shock'. The whole concept of being startled by a different culture seemed foreign to me. I have always considered myself open-minded and well-educated about different cultures, especially those in Europe. Even as I have travelled abroad, I never felt – "culturally shocked" – surprised, yes, but never truly shocked. I liked the thought that no culture was able to actually stagger me before; it meant that I was tolerant enough of other customs to not feel stunned. As it turns out, those surprises that fascinated me were in fact little culture shocks. And apparently, I have had many.

16 One of the first culture shocks I have experienced happened when I was about eleven or twelve years old. It was around that age that I have started to develop a sense of adventure. I wanted to go everywhere, to travel around the world, learn at least five new languages and discover fascinating things that I had never heard of before. My father is like that too, always looking for something new to witness or undergo and I guess that is where I got it from. I started to actively participate in the annual trips to the coast, where my father was born and therefore still had family there. It has always been a tradition that my father would return to his home town for a weekend in either December or January and I decided to go with him. It became a part of my tradition too. But the reason I loved it so much was probably the culture itself. The people I met were so open and welcoming, something I was not used to. Living in a small closed village had its downsides. The thing that fascinated me the most, however, was the language they spoke. It was Slovenian but at the same time it was not.

The dialect was so different from what I was accustomed to that I encountered troubles understanding it. It took me a few years to grasp it and even now it's a bit difficult to comprehend everything. To put it briefly, my first culture shock came from my own family – the language, the easiness of life and openness to everyone.

I was fourteen when I got the opportunity to travel to Brussels for a few days. It was exciting to see a new city that I had only heard about before. The mix of different cultures, languages, and their dynamic was more than interesting to observe. I wanted to explore the city and this decision got me and my friend lost. That was not such a bad thing on itself – as it turned out, I got to experience another culture shock. Whenever we got off-track, there was at least one person coming up to us to inquire if we were lost and in need of assistance. We never asked any passers-by for directions but we still got them. That is my fondest memory of Belgium – people's willingness to always help you find your way.

My next culture shock happened at sixteen. I moved to Italy with my father for a year and I discovered that people there love to hold on to old grudges and prejudices. I was a Slovenian on Italian territory that was still highly affected by the Second World War. There were whole communities of Slovenians who refused to speak Slovenian, not only to each other but to their family as well. I met women who have forgotten their mother tongue because of the oppression they suffered during and after the war. I learnt not to tell anyone that I am Slovenian and try to use Italian instead. English was useless there – in the whole year I met only four people who spoke it.



In the same year I took a little trip to Spain – to Madrid and Salamanca. I was again surprised by the easy-going population. No one was rushing anywhere, people were open and friendly, embracing each other even if they met for the first time. But the picture that is still the most vivid in my mind is from an evening in the main square of Salamanca. Everyone was just sitting on the ground, meeting their friends or family and even interacting with strangers next to them. This atmosphere absolutely fascinated me.

Another one came about two years ago, when the big wave of refugees reached Slovenia. I was one of the first to enlist as a volunteer to provide aid at the refugee camp in Celje. What I expected were people who were uneducated, poor and rurally traditional. What I got were people who were lost; many with tertiary education, some doctors even, with personal possessions and family relationships that were astounding. Among those was a young man, only

about three years older than me who I got along with very well. He was a Muslim Syrian, who talked to me about the situation in his country and why he felt the need to leave. His and all other stories were heart-breaking and I was shocked by just how much humanity was still left in them after being treated so poorly.

There were many more recent culture shocks that I might talk about, but for now these are the ones that had the most profound effect on me. I have learned that being bewildered by a culture doesn't necessarily mean that you are not liberal or ignorant. Just the opposite – if you are able to admit that you were shocked by a culture and you accept it fully, you are also able to say that you have met some people, seen some places and experienced some things previously unimaginable to you.

## Life - The Simpler it is, the Better

*by Leja Kezmić*

Society has changed so much in the last century. The more a person can have, the more he or she wants. It is a never-ending cycle of wanting and yearning for more. People want all the shiny, expensive toys which bring joy for a while, but later on that feeling inevitably fades. At the same time, people are aware that there is more to life than fancy cars and big mansions. Everyone in this world wants the feeling of happiness. But the truth is, may you find it ugly or pretty, happiness is not 'a toy' or a 'gadget' that can be bought or exchanged. It is rather something that can be found or discovered. It can change the whole perspective on life of an individual.

A simple piece of advice to everyone who is looking for happiness – it is found within. A person is in charge of his or her own happiness and no one else can find it for them. No matter how much money or how many friends a person has, what matters most is how they feel inside. Happiness can bring so much more than material things in life. What is even more interesting is that if one is not content, then not even a Ferrari or a brand-new villa can help. When looking for happiness, the simplest of things are the ones that matter the most and should receive more attention.

For someone, happiness can be found within a lovely yellow daffodil that is swaying gracefully on the field, whereas for someone else, it is when a partner kisses them in the morning and makes a nice breakfast. Little things like these are the ones that make a person happy. Positive feelings are never complicated. Society makes it look as if happiness is so difficult to find, but on the contrary – people are those who are difficult and tend to complicate, even that which is simple. Society needs to realise that happiness is not the same for everyone and that there are so many different ways of finding it.

From observing society nowadays, it can be seen that more and more people are selfish and care only about themselves. If you wish to be content, this is not an option. People are happiest when they share that feeling with their friends and family. This is also crucial for spreading joy and positive feelings. It is a way of finding happiness and also keeping it – sharing this feeling with others and making them feel that way as well. Doing that helps to keep a person cheerful for a long time.

To sum it up, happiness is by far one of the nicest feelings a person can experience. It is important to find it. It can certainly be difficult, since the modern age has forgotten all about the simplicity of life and what truly matters in today's world. That is also the reason why so many people are unhappy and unable to enjoy life. Simple things are the ones that can make a person happy and Dumbledore stated this very nicely in the movie *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*:

*“Happiness can be found, even in the darkest of times, if one only remembers to turn on the light.”*

# Exuberant Exchanges of Travel Tales

## Erasmusing in eSpain

by Maruša Rojc

I was asked to write this article quite a few weeks ago and yet I have only started to write it now. I have two excuses for my procrastination. The first one is the fact that I have integrated entirely into the new environment where everything is done "despacito" (i.e. slowly). The second one is that I am not entirely sure how to describe my Erasmus experience as it has been an emotional rollercoaster.



18 When I decided that I wanted to go on an exchange, I knew immediately that Madrid would be my first choice. I had visited the city before and was amazed by its throb. As I did not want the semester abroad to be all about studying, I really appreciated the position of the capital in the centre of the country, which I thought would be convenient for travelling.

So, there I was at the beginning of September, in the middle of Spain, with my two suitcases, not knowing what awaits me but eager to find out. With my phone in my hand half of the time, I merged into the surroundings quite well, the only difference being the fact that Spanish people were sending voice messages via Whatsapp (I tell you, they are obsessed with that app), and I was trying to figure out the direction in which I was supposed to go on Google Maps (technology is a blessing). However, as weeks passed, I found my way around and soon got rid of the GPS.

Once I did that, I was able to observe my surroundings a bit more and soon I realised how different Spain and Slovenia are. Now, I have read the "Erasmus guides" and I am aware that you should not compare a new country to your home, but I could not help myself.

The first thing I noticed was that the stereotype about Spanish people being more extraverted is true. Imagine going to a shop in Slovenia. What if every shop assistant greeted you with: "Hi there, beautiful!" Well, it happens here all the time and once you get used to it, it really makes your day. Another thing I had to get used to was the Spanish way of greeting others. My first meetings were quite funny – and awkward. I tried to introduce myself in a proper Slovenian way by offering my hand, but the Spanish people went full in, immediately giving me a hug and a kiss on both cheeks. While they would seem intrusive in Slovenia, the way they greeted me here is completely normal for Spanish people.



The pace of life here is really slow and relaxed. People do not seem to rush anywhere (except on the metro – as if the next train won't come in three minutes). They walk slowly (which is sometimes really annoying), they eat slowly, they live slowly. Perhaps that is to compensate for their fast and excited way of speaking. Even though I am a student of Spanish, various times I found myself in situations

where I had to ask my co-speaker "*Podrías repetirlo? (Could you repeat that?)*" or "*Ay perdón, no te entiendo (Oh sorry, I don't understand you)*," due to the speed of their speech. I soon realized that studying a language and learning about its grammatical structures at university is one thing, but going to a foreign country and actually using the language all the time is another. I might be able to enumerate the uses of the subjunctive, but the truth is I sure don't use it correctly in everyday conversations (please mind the speed of conversations here). Luckily, Spanish people are extremely nice and willing to help. They are actually pretty surprised when they realize that you can speak Spanish, and although most of the time I am thinking to myself: "Maruša, come on, couldn't you have put together a better sentence?" they always compliment me on my language skills.

I sometimes struggle with Spanish, but it seems that they struggle with English. At the University, I am taking two courses at the English department and let me just say that our phonetics (as well as grammar) professors would shake their heads in irritation if they heard them speak, and by "them" I don't mean just the students but the professors, too. Putting that aside, college is ... well, college. You all know the drill – studying, reading, a few mental breakdowns, and a lot of coffee breaks.

My absolutely favourite part of Erasmus has been exploring Madrid, its surroundings, and travelling around. Luckily, the Erasmus student organisation at my university offers a variety of tours, trips, parties, and other events, which were a good start for me to get to know the city and some people. BUT. Remember how I said Spanish people do everything slowly? Well, that applies to trips as well, and we never left the meeting point at the agreed time (for those who don't know me – I am usually 20 minutes early). That is why later my friends and I decided to go on some trips on our own. So far, I have travelled to Zaragoza, Córdoba, Valencia, many other smaller towns around Madrid, Barcelona, and Portugal (my absolute favourite). If anyone is still deciding whether to go on an Erasmus exchange or not – go! All the travelling makes the experience incredible! (Don't worry about classes and exams – you only Erasmus once.)

Nevertheless, my staying here is slowly coming to an end and I am trying to take advantage of the last days to read all of the books I should have already read, to figure out how not to exceed the weight limit of my suitcase and to say goodbye to friends I have made here. It has been an interesting and amazing experience and I have to admit that I am already thinking about where to go for my Master's ...

## Au Pairing in the UK

by Katarina Pribožič

You are probably sick of hearing tales from fellow students who go abroad for a while, but that will not stop me. It really is an experience you should have, since you are language students; whether you go on an exchange or try yourself in the au pair world. Although, it is not all roses.

It is a tough life, being an au pair. I have to take the child to school every now and then and pick him up after (when his parents have other things to take care of). I have to drive him with a comfortable automatic car I have at my disposal for any and all errands I happen to have in the city. Cooking is definitely a must, otherwise you may end up eating their pre-prepared microwave food. They really have whole aisles of that and it is slightly annoying when a ten-year-old is wondering why make a lasagne from scratch if you can buy it in Sainsbury's and pop it in the oven. Seriously, not a mindset we should follow. But back to how hard it is: I get two days a week off (and I spent one or two for writing this, so appreciate it) and obviously I am free when the child is at school. I sit in the lounge and watch the river flow, carrying swans along. The family even had the nerve to pay for a skiing trip to France. I truly do not know if I will make it (back home).

I have spent some time exploring the city I live in and others as well, but the best trip was to Scotland during the Christmas holidays. It was a ten-day trip of wonder. This is probably the most amazing place in the world. Long (but not very well maintained) roads, blue skies, green forests, and a lot of orange this time of year. The people are so

friendly (except on trains) and chatty. Oh, and drunk. I had the pleasure of witnessing the Edinburgh Hogmanay street party and it was indeed something. I had left my camera at home because I was afraid someone might take it, but then I saw none of them were even capable of taking themselves home. It is a good thing the city offers free bus services on such alcohol-laden nights. The English tend to look down upon them due to their profound love of liquids and they even consider Scots fools because of believing in Nessie. So, they are not the most revered of nations. I cannot see why. They are open, ready to help, they talk you up and suggest where to get really drunk, and they have the best accents in the world. I was told there was one sure way to be accepted by them. If you say this sentence with the right intonation, you are sure to get a couple of drinks: /gi:zΛ 'paɪj pal 'e/.

Some of you might already be considering this, but are being held back by someone else. Maybe you do not want to leave your family or partners. It is not the end of the world and you can always visit each other. I did not go to Scotland alone and it was after not seeing my boyfriend for three months. In this age of technology, distance is hardly an obstacle. I chat with my family as often as I can. More often than I did when I lived in Ljubljana, to be honest. It is a miracle we still have something to say to each other, though there tends to be awkwardness when my dad is left alone with me. Not a man of words, unless it is a lecture. The point is that you will miss them and they will miss

you, the goodbyes will be very difficult and emotional, and the first thing you will want to do after boarding the plane is go back. But think of it as just a very long trip. I had decided not to go back home during my time here, because I have the unique chance to explore this place, because everything is within reach. Domestic flights are cheap, I can rent a car, and next stop: Ireland.

This is really one of the best things that had ever happened to me and I recommend going abroad to everyone, but only if you really want it. In all fairness, being an au pair does include you spending time with children, helping them, even being their role model, but especially being their friend. It is not something that happens over night, but you do gradually grow fond of them and they of you. So think carefully, if you can care for a child. I am lucky, I got a cheeky 10-year-old whose only dislike is doing homework and he can even be tricked into doing that. There are, however, moments when you do not know what to do. Like when he asked me if I believed in God - he goes to a Catholic school. Now, I am quite good at avoiding straight answers and started blabbering on about how we all believe in something and give it different names, but he just

shuts me up by saying it is all rubbish. So that one turned out well, but you have to be careful with children because you can end up changing their whole view on life. Hopefully you are the kind of person who will change it for the better and become someone they will remember fondly. If you cannot see yourself as an au pair, there are still exchanges and irresponsible drinking with fellow students, do not worry.

This almost became a lecture, even though I just wanted to share my experience here, but I really think you can benefit from going to a country where they speak the language you are learning. This will probably only be read by ten students of English and even they will not all reach the end, but spread the word, you faithful three. I am not implying you do not know that going beyond our borders is good for language skills, people skills, becoming independent, I am merely nudging the ones that are on the fence about it. It is a great experience and I bet you will love it. And if you do not, you can write about it in the next edition of ENGLIST. And in case you do love it, just write about that. That is irrelevant. Just write. You three.

## Erasmus + Traineeship at Holystone Primary School in Newcastle

by Nina Gorkič

Let me start with one fact: Holystone simply rocks. But let's talk about the school later. First, let me describe Newcastle. Situated in the northeast of England, Newcastle is one of the biggest regional centres. Only a two hours' drive away from Edinburgh, half an hour's drive away from Durham and not so far away from Sheffield, Newcastle is the best location for exploring Scotland, Ireland, and other nearby cities.



With their Geordie accent and much better weather conditions than one might expect (there isn't much rain, the only bothersome thing is the wind), Newcastle reveals itself as a perfect spot for getting the real experience of northern England and Scotland.

If I mention the subject of accommodation here as well, I would say that it isn't much more expensive than elsewhere abroad. I didn't search for a flat via student webpages but through local websites. In the end I found a room for 300 pounds, and together with my fellow trainees Anita

and Amanda we lived 15 min away from the city centre.

### The School

Holystone Primary School is known as one of the best primary schools in the area, and when I became a part of this big family, I soon realised why. The surroundings are warm and accepting, they make you feel part of their staff right away - my head teacher came to collect us at the airport in another city and drove us to our apartments and then all the three head teachers organised a welcoming dinner for the three of us - it was really amazing. If I now focus on their teaching methods - they are quite different from our system.

In England children start going to primary school at the same age as our children attend kindergarten. This stage is called 'Key Stage 1'. And after they get into higher grades, they proceed to Key Stage 2. I mostly observed the higher grades. Their teaching methods differ from ours. Their classes are based on project teaching, meaning they do not have textbooks, their material is prepared by their teachers and therefore quite individualised. A lot of time and focus is put into this material preparation and the teachers stay in school afterwards to glue all the papers in kids' notebooks.

The other fact that I found fascinating is the constant and systematic system of awarding. Almost all schools in England use a 'merits' (in the form of stickers and praise) system of constant rewarding as a means of motivation. In Holystone they even took this one step further: they divid-

ed their school into 5 houses – like in Harry Potter – and then they implemented an award system based on marbles. In this way every house collects their marbles that are brought to the staff room at the end of the semester, where the headmaster counts them and gives a prize to the winning house.



My observations and help were based primarily on group observations and later on individual help with reading, writing and spelling. I also volunteered to prepare my own class on comic strip drawing, where I drew a comic strip based on one of the stories they were reading and at the end the children designed their own comic strips.



The head teacher and the staff are really nice and helpful and they really put a lot of effort into making their foreign guests feel as welcome as possible. As a student trainee, I was left free to choose how I wanted to spend my time there, what to observe and how much to teach, so I spent my time with classes that needed an extra hand or had an interesting activity to participate in.

I would not hesitate to choose Holystone again, because I spent some of the best few months abroad here and it truly was the experience of a lifetime for me. Therefore I would like to thank the school here and also the departmental coordinator Monika Kavalir, who enabled us to experience England in this way.

What I would also like to mention here is the fact that Newcastle is a wonderful place where our faculty cooperates with many different schools, so if you don't want to go on this journey alone, you can travel there together

with your fellow students. I already mentioned that I wasn't living there alone, I went to Newcastle with two of my student colleagues, Anita (Kelvin Grove Primary School) and Amanda (Lumley Primary School). Without them my experience wouldn't have been so epic, because together we travelled around England and spent almost every weekend exploring a new city.

Our schools were connected from the very beginning, and before our departure we carried out a really wonderful project – Slovenian Day. We started with a PowerPoint presentation of Slovenia, where we live, our food, showed them the attractions and landmarks. Later on, we connected all of this to the story of the *Cat Cobbler* (Muca copatarica), which we translated into English. We chose that story due to it being very representative of the Slovenian countryside and other Slovenian characteristics, such as white houses with red roofs (in England all houses are red brick) and the fact that our children wear slippers in schools and at home (in England they don't). In the end, all the children came to school wearing slippers for that special day and they loved it. Afterwards, we linked all these characteristics to Christmas in Slovenia and told the children that if they were good and cleaned after themselves, then they would not get a visit from the Cat Cobbler, but from the three Slovenian December Men (*Miklavž*, *Dedek Mraz* and also *Božiček*) instead, and they would get three gifts!

Finally, we nicely summed up the presentation with five related workshops. The kids made their own slipper, coloured the Slovenian flag, and learned where our little chicken-shaped country is situated on the map. They also made their own postcards with Slovenian greetings and, last but not least, I also designed a 3D pyramid-like ornament with all three December men on it.

Overall, we managed to present and show the beauties of Slovenia to at least 500 children, if not more, and to all the staff members, so I believe that this was quite a contribution on a national level.

And this final project was, I believe, the most important mark that we left behind, because those children will always carry Slovenia in their hearts because of it.

Therefore, fellow colleagues, I appeal to you to continue with projects like this, and if there is a free spot for you to go and experience England through a traineeship I advise you to do so. So do not hesitate – apply! You will not regret it, I promise; experiences like these truly are life changers. And it is much cheaper in England now that the pound has dropped in value. So, as Mark Twain once said:

*“Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.”*

# Fruitful Film Findings & Terrific TV Tips

## Review of Guillermo del Toro's *The Shape of Water*

by Tina Bašić

A reinvention of the classic tale of “Beauty and the Beast”, Guillermo del Toro's newest masterpiece could easiest be described as *Amélie* meets *Creature from the Black Lagoon*. The Mexican director, who together with Alfonso Cuarón and Alejandro Gonzalez Iñárritu forms the so-called “Three Amigos of Cinema”, first rose to fame with his Oscar-nominated dark fantasy movie *Pan's Labyrinth*. Known for his idiosyncratic style, he returns this year with a fantasy drama movie that already managed to snatch the Golden Lion at the 74<sup>th</sup> Venice International Film Festival.



Being dubbed as an adult fairy tale, the movie stars Sally Hawkins as the lonely and mute Elisa Esposito, who makes her living while working the night shift as a janitor at a secret government facility. Abandoned by her family as a child, her only two friends are her funny African-American co-worker Zelda (Octavia Spencer) and her oddball artist neighbour Giles (Richard Jenkins). While cleaning a government facility is perhaps not the most striking profession, Elise still manages to lead a comfortably mundane life, that is, until an amphibian-like creature called the “Asset” (Doug Jones) is brought into the facility and all hell breaks loose. Set during the Cold War and right before the Cuban Missile Crisis, the creature is to be studied to gain advantage over the Soviet

Union. When Elise discovers the “Asset”, an unlikely bond forms between the two and she is determined to save it before it is too late.

The two-hour-long movie has been a passion project of del Toro's for quite some time – he first came up with the idea back in 2011. He initially pitched it as a black-and-white movie, and understandably so, since the film is set in 1962 Baltimore. And here's a fun fact: the famous musical *Hairspray* is also set in in 1962 Baltimore, just to put things into perspective. But del Toro quickly changed his mind about the colour, as the studio offered him a considerably lower budget if it was in black and white. Opting for the colour movie with a bigger budget, the finished feature is not at all lacking; in fact, it's quite reasonable to assume that the movie gained much more than it lost: the vivid colours make it more palpable and poignant rather than remove it from reality even more. And anyone that's ever seen one of his movies can safely say that they are amazing visual experiences.

What stands out most from this movie are the stellar performances from the entire cast, especially from Sally Hawkins. It might seem easy to play a role with no actual lines, however, that is where the real acting comes in – the body language and facial expressions must be even more genuine and convincing, yet at the same time one cannot resort to overacting. Not to mention the trap of feeling hyper-aware of one's physical presence. Luckily, the British actress, who had to learn American Sign Language to play the part of Elise, had it all figured out, as she managed to breathe life into Elisa with her striking portrayal of a determined and powerful woman. Kudos go also to Michael Shannon for portraying a convincing villain, and to Doug Jones for his astonishing yet vulnerable portrayal of the hybrid fish man.

Del Toro has yet again succeeded in writing and directing a compelling movie, managing to address topics like female masturbation, sexuality, xenophobia, racism, homophobia, discrimination, abuse of power and toxic masculinity while creating the illusion of distance by setting it in the early 1960s. So, is *The Shape of Water* just a parable of humanity or perhaps a cautious tale of a looming dark future? Whatever your interpretation – and there are arguments for both – at the end of the day, this is a movie for all the outcasts and oddballs, and for all the underdogs who are continuously reminded of what they lack instead of what they possess.

# You Were Never Really Here - Quite Literally

by SJ

Have you ever watched a mind-blowing movie which left you feeling as if you were a better person now that you have watched it? Or one that left you with a new perspective on the world, with a tad bit more knowledge than you had before? Now compare that to those cliché Hollywood movies which usually leave you feeling empty or indifferent. *You Were Never Really Here* is neither of those. It will not leave you feeling as if you are at the top of the world or encourage you, nor will it imbue you with a sensation of satisfaction that you have watched something of quality. On the other hand, it will most certainly not leave you feeling impervious. It will, however, disappoint. You got through the whole movie expecting a spectacular ending and there just isn't one. Just as if you were never really there.

*You Were Never Really Here*. 'Drama, Mystery, Thriller.' Originally released on 27 May 2017 in France, the movie has only been screened at film festivals throughout Europe (so far). As several other major motion pictures, this one too is an adaptation of a novel bearing the same title as the book (written by Jonathan Ames). The screenplay was authored by Lynne Ramsay, who also directed the movie. While not a renowned director, you may be familiar with another one of her movies – *We Need to Talk About Kevin*. Remember the bizarreness of that movie? This one is predominantly the same.

A brutal, damaged hitman named Joe (Joaquin Phoenix) goes on a rescue mission, searching for the senator's missing daughter. The girl, Nina (Ekaterina Samsonov), is believed to have fallen victim to child sex traffickers. Joe faces numerous obstacles on his way to taking justice and revenge into his own hands.

The movie in itself was *good*. Not mind-blowingly good, but good nonetheless. The storytelling was not straightforward, which I adore in movies, but there was something that was not quite right about this one. About an hour into the movie and you still had no idea what happened to Joe that made such a damaged person out of him. We get snaps of domestic abuse and war, but never the whole picture. The characters feel distant, detached from the reality they live in. It is hard to detect their emotions as if the whole concept of feeling was alien to them. Where you expect fear, you find none. Where there should be pain, there is blankness. Where there should be hope, there is emptiness.

To focus more on the structure of the film, the visuals and the music were astounding. There were so many instances where the movie positively scared me, sort of like a jump scare. The camera seemed to capture every action perfectly, the frames were a work of art.

In order to gradually conclude my writing, I wish to stress the fact that the movie is satisfactory. As mentioned, the visuals, the music, and the actors themselves - now that I think about it - are extraordinary. I would recommend it to those who seek movies which are not your-average-Hollywood movies, but are at the same time not interested in deep topics. The movie does not convey a message, at least not one that would be visible to me. While it feels shallow and the ending is a bit disappointing if you watch it with an intent of gaining something from the movie, it is a masterpiece in itself. Therefore, the only problem I actually had with the movie was that, after I watched it, I felt as if I was never really there.



## Review of Deadwood

by Matija Škofljanec

To me, *Deadwood* was always on that endless list of "I'll get to it eventually." *Deadwood* was released somewhere along the same time as *The Sopranos* and *The Wire*, forming what I've heard critics call the HBO holy trinity, so when I got round to it this summer, I was in the mind-set of "typical HBO show with a big cast, complicated story-

line, nudity, swearing, and a lack of plot armour." Some of those expectations checked out, some did not, but it definitely was not the typical show I expected.

On the surface, *Deadwood* is essentially a genre work. It's a western chronicling the development of what is at first a lawless settlement, the slow process of it integrating into

the United States, and the growing pains of it becoming a civilized community under the rule of law, with all the pluses and minuses that come with it. The show mostly features real historical events and people such as Bill Hickok, Calamity Jane, Seth Bullock and Al Swearingen.

There are numerous reasons as to why you should watch *Deadwood*, but the one that should be mentioned first is its dialogue, which might just be the best I've ever heard on television. It's playful, historically accurate, sharp and, while extremely ornate, it never feels too bloated or complicated for the sake of being complicated.

One thing that also ought to be mentioned here is the amount of swearing in the show. You can expect a steady stream of expletives in any HBO production, but even by HBO standards, *Deadwood* is in a league of its own. If profanity is something that bothers you, steer clear.

The other most notable stylistic feature is the number of monologues per episode, putting quite a burden on each actor who on any given day might be given a three-minute scene where they're talking to themselves, a dog, or, in one case, a severed head in a box. This would usually already be challenging, but due to how the show's creative process was handled, the script was often unfinished by the time filming began, so the actors went in with little to no preparation, acting each scene in isolation and not knowing what the end product would be due to rewrites of the scenes between takes.

However, this is not apparent while watching the series. In a rather large ensemble cast, there is no single weak link. In fact, there are several particularly strong ones, and *Deadwood* in turn launched quite a few respectable careers, such as Timothy Olyphant's (*Justified*), Jim Beaver's (*Supernatural*) Ian McShane's (*Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Game of Thrones*), Molly Parker's (*House of Cards*), etc. Out of the colourful cast, however, one actor stands out even more: Ian McShane. His foul-mouthed Saloon owner and de-facto camp leader Al Swearingen steals every single moment he spends onscreen with his presence and charisma, and pushes Swearingen's character from an antagonist to the camp's central figure and antihero.

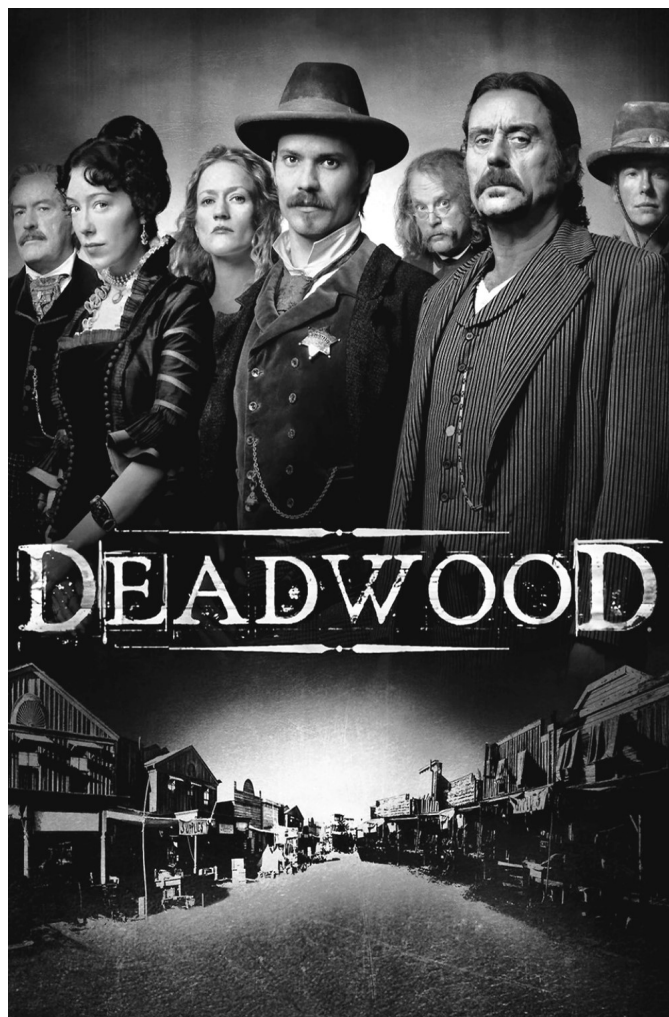
As I've said, the show's script was written, rewritten and reworked at the last possible moment, which might have even helped individual performances, but it certainly helped the dialogue. It does, however, harm the show when it comes to the plot.

Returning to certain other HBO greats like *The Sopranos* or *The Wire*: the former sometimes resolves plot lines in a less than satisfactory manner almost out of spite, while the latter does so in order to make a point about the world it is portraying. They might not always wrap everything up in a nice bow, but there was always a method to the madness. With *Deadwood*, while madness certainly plays a part, the method is rather questionable. The creator David Milch and the writing team are great at setting up conflict, but it seems they never plan for a resolution, which has

resulted in quite a few subplots that received an anticlimactic ending or no ending at all. Because of that, those subplots were soon forgotten by the viewers.

If you're expecting high-noon shootouts, great tensions building up over a season reaching a satisfying conclusion, and grand revenge tales typical for a western, keep looking. This show is not it. This show is about people coming together, and how, from a settlement of bars and brothels, a community with a school, a theatre, a local government and a bank is formed. It is not always pretty, it is almost never morally just, it simply chronicles what happened.

I have seen a lot of HBO shows – probably an unhealthy number at this point. *Game of Thrones*, *The Sopranos*, *The Wire*, *Boardwalk Empire*, even the HBO granddaddy *Oz*. I normally rank the shows I watch, at least in my head. I know why I like one and which one I liked more than another. *Deadwood*, for me, deserves a separate category. It is different enough to the degree that even now, two months after having finished it, I'm still not quite sure what to make of it. In the end, for me, whether you will like *Deadwood* or not comes down to one question: can a show be so captivating, well written, consistent and yet original that it makes you forget about the plot itself? For me, the answer is apparently yes.





# Poetry Paradise

## Four Sonnets

*by Primož Čibej*

Please do not look so cynical tonight.  
The way you always do in the evening  
when I've overstayed my welcome. Smoking  
more than we both should will not make things right,

no matter how hard we both wish for it.  
So please do not worry and embrace me.  
And for one night let us forget who we  
are, and let me listen to your heart beat

so wrongly, as if you had days to live,  
and I in turn had all the centuries.

And the only company? Memories  
of times together in moments like these.

So I beg you, hold me close and kiss me.  
And in the morning after – forgive me.

Humans have forgotten Prometheus.  
We now reckon ourselves to be purer.  
Shrieks were silenced atop Golgotha  
in our running theme of killing saviours,

too many to be named in fourteen lines.  
They died for us once, but never again.

And with one look at history we can  
rather quickly gather that he who dies

with some principle in mind, dies in vain.

We are carrion birds, flocking to feast  
on the carcasses of Gods. And the beast,  
in its sated state, seeks someone to blame

for the fact that we are murderous frauds.  
It can't be us. So, it must have been Gods.

At the end of times, only time remains.  
You say that now, don't you, as you're buried  
before me and you say your introit prayers  
one last time. And well, truth be told, it pains

me that you have left in such a manner,  
leaving me with questions left unanswered.  
And now my notes and papers lay scattered  
in the air around that waving banner,

black as death itself beneath leaden skies.  
Like a sickly hand it beckons thoughts of  
ashes found on the leaves of that black bough.  
Is this all that remains when a man dies?

Farewell, teacher, you had your rightful claims.  
At the end of times, only time remains.

You keep telling me that I drink too much.

Would you not, if this was the only way  
for you to keep all the nightmares at bay?  
And all the voices blaming you and such?

You tell me to moderate my smoking,  
unaware how quickly guilt goes away  
when I'm doped out of my mind and I lay  
next to you, head on your chest, and hoping

that you will not ask me to talk to you,  
saying how you want to get to know me.

Don't be another part of the story  
where people will lie about listening through

to why I am so afraid. So please dear,  
while we both live, just hold me tight and near.

## A Man

*by Maja Mihevc*

A swish of white and blue  
at the edge of thy consciousness,  
like the foaming sea,  
surrounding the land you live in.

Tasting regret, like fine aged wine,  
mixed with the blood  
licked off your fingers,  
as you sharpen your tongue.

Gunpowder crowning your hair  
and the ticking clock in your ears,  
counting the days until the ending.

But there is joy in the blades you hold,  
as the chipped pieces of your soul  
still gather in a pile of hope,  
building a grave of calm.

# Villanelle: A Concept

by Maša Rebernik

(heavily inspired by Elizabeth Bishop's *One Art*)

The concept of letting go isn't hard to comprehend,  
but so many people seem adamant in their pursuit –  
trying hard to mend what has already come to an end.

Come on! Come to terms with a loose end:  
Forget about that clumsy conversation or forgive a  
dispute.  
The concept of letting go isn't hard to comprehend.

Then try harder: find solace in cities, in people that  
transcend  
those which you're trying your hardest to refute.  
Yet you're stubborn, trying hard to mend what has come  
to an end.

I'm moving – losing! a home, a whole continent of kindly  
faces. I pretend  
that I'm resigning – I'm leaving a corner of the world I  
could never substitute.  
The concept of letting go isn't hard to comprehend.

Nevertheless, I will find a rule or two that I can bend,  
and no doubt you will follow suit.  
We're stubborn. We try so hard to mend what has come to  
an end.

To yield is what we all (at first) intend.  
But in the end, are we letting go of our pursuit?  
The concept of letting go might not be hard  
to comprehend,  
but sometimes we need to mend what has (has it?) come  
to an end.

# Kinetics

by Ariela Herček

Going from sleep to the moonspace,  
going 200 miles per minute;  
hands bending like air, sucking all the oxygen  
out of the voids -

going faster now, from rise to crumble  
until skin turns radioactive red and ignites  
the honey-suckle dew of the day.

Praying to the clouds on a weekly basis,  
fingers cramped from begging for reprieve;  
all of this old starlight inside me now dust and ash.  
Dust and ash.

The slow trickle of yellow leaves  
and the midnight eyes of the wolves and I

still want to escape into the wild like  
a beast,

teeth tearing flesh and still believing  
still believing that sometimes life gets easier  
and growing up gets less complicated  
and everything you want is just a touch away,  
not unreachable -

going from joy to bitterness like waves fall,  
steadily sweeping all these mistakes and wrong turns into  
knowledge -

silver linings have never looked so dark before.

# Illusional Reality

by Aleksander Jovović

Dwelling on the balcony on day-to-day basis, trying to hear voices, but being reluctant to any sound that approaches.

Act 96

Over the course of years a Great Wall has been built and the distinction between reality and imagination collapsed and had fallen into oblivion.

Empty.

WE rise from our dearest dreams, which are by default part of our imagination/daily doings, and immediately forsake the reality of life by unlocking our lightened screens and start seeking for the unnecessary. Scrolling down as moments of uncovered joy fades and becomes an instant past; a thing of the past, which will never be recollected and spoken about when the battery lowers, therefore instigating an action.. an action of a must, as you and the people around you lay down your weapons that have forever disconnect us from reality thus making that moment seem unbearable when present. Especially when you are all alone.

Hating it, huh?

You should understand that restorative change is rare in this instance, but you could "lose" your charger from time to time and keep that battery low.

## Poli-tics

by Ina Poteko

This is a story never heard before  
About a little boy  
Whose parents always wanted more  
His life was void of joy  
He really loved his mother Earth  
He had an ingenious plan  
He recognised the planet's worth  
His dream job was a garbage man  
One day he hugged a mighty tree  
And a tiny tick attacked  
Little did our human see  
That with meningitis it was packed  
That caused no hatred as of yet  
Because he was not aware  
Of the illness he would get  
And the tick genuinely didn't care  
The illness damaged half his brain  
So he went to study politics  
And his life went down the drain  
His friends were all such pricks

After all  
His childhood dreams finally came true  
He became a garbage man  
As he always wanted to  
Except he was no longer man  
He was just garbage –  
Boo\*

*\*an expression of strong disapproval*

## The Girl

by Karin Petko

That's her.  
The girl  
who always cares  
and looks stunning  
in anything she wears.  
Even running  
'round the place,  
she is always  
surrounded by grace.  
Like an invisible lace  
is her pride.  
She thinks with her own pace  
and light  
is her stride.  
She shines bright  
through the night  
filled with moon.  
I need to hold her.  
The girl.  
Soon.

## The Man Who Looked Down

by Enej Sečki

The gift of thought;  
Eternal imaginative bliss.  
Eternal knowledge brought  
Self-awareness and understanding.

No limit to what is obtainable,  
Serenity is in the hollow thought.  
Reality is what is imaginable  
In the picturesque, vivid visions.

The blinded man contemplated.  
He flew through the sound of the  
mind's symphony,  
He saw all he wished,  
All his crooked mind defecated.

The blinded man was free,  
No end to his lucid imagination.  
All he has seen, all he hoped to be,  
All gone when his eyes opened.

The burden of thought;  
Eternal imagination, hopeless.  
Eternal knowledge brought  
Self-awareness and understanding.

Nothing is obtainable,  
Serenity is non-existent.  
Nothing he wishes is achievable  
In the realms of reality.

The man contemplated.  
The symphony came crashing down.  
His fictional world disintegrated,  
All he had had disappeared.

The man was trapped.  
Reality broke the imaginable.  
All he wanted, all he ever wished,  
All gone when his eyes opened.

The vast plains of internal peace are  
kept out of reach.  
What the keeper of dreams could  
achieve, the body impeached.

This beauty, this freedom,  
Enslaved in transient matter.  
All that is conceivable,  
Can be gone in a mirror's shatter.

He looked down.  
Down on his pathetic existence.  
All he could do is frown,  
No matter how hard his persistence.

The man who looked down saw the  
cage he was trapped in. The flesh, re-  
strictive, demanding.

# Emotionally Raw

by Ariela Herček

Emotionally Raw, like meat, like vegetables sitting too long  
in the sun,  
the brown sludge of earth, the same colour as their eyes,  
Emotionally Raw like lonely trains with lonely passengers  
staring out the lonely windows at the lonely cities with  
lonely people hiding in their lonely beds, covered with  
nothing but blankets upon blankets and sorrows upon  
sorrows and  
dreaming of absolution, dreaming in a futile kind of state  
of the white moonrays caressing their skin and healing  
all the bruises,  
Emotionally Raw, like Time you spent apart from everyone  
you loved,  
that time when you were still Emotionally Uncomplicated,  
but has that ever been true, has it always been like this,  
you, alone in your room, face turned blank  
like Emotionless,  
like lies you tell yourself just to survive it,  
Emotionally Raw like meat you eat because your body  
needs,  
not because you want to,  
similar to how you bow down not because you want to, but  
because you need to

in order to see another day,  
to build upon empires and empires of  
Emotional Rawness in its rawest form,  
complicated like magnetic grids, like gravity  
like gothic architectural accomplishments like the deep  
Ocean like traffic like Space  
like Time and Space and Revolutionary Ideas  
thought by a group of people who are  
Emotionally Raw and Emotionally Exposed,  
nonetheless still hiding,  
nobody knows where, just searching for that  
ancient halogen light, yellow or white or blue  
Nobody knows,  
because Everybody is Emotionally Raw  
and saying that for a couple dozen times doesn't make it  
make sense, I never make any sense  
and the poets are all graceful liars and the bedsheets are  
all soaked through with pain  
and the distant starlight is an indescribable  
ache you feel in your toes, when  
you wake up in the middle of the night  
ALONE in your bed,  
Emotionally Raw.

## Dance With Me, Death!

by Enej Sečki

Dance with me, Death!  
Show me where life goes  
when it has enough of itself!  
Show me where throes  
get laid to rest.  
Dance with me, Death!

The sight of the end opens the human mind.  
To only hope in life is senseless, you'll find.  
The sight of the end crushes the human mind,  
And rebuilds it, towards reason inclined.

Dance with me,  
Show me your mystery,  
No litany  
Will lay its seed in me.

Embrace me in your cold arms,  
Never let me go from your warm grasp.  
Take me with you, out of the storm,  
Dance with me, Death!

## Oath

by Aleksander Jovović

Vanished from the depths of pain,  
No more suffering and free at last,  
I heard a noise, it was a train,  
It came from the past.

The cabin was seemed hollow,  
Until a beauty's face enter,  
Was it the past, why follow?  
Not a torment but a centre.

Thy hair was pure gold,  
The eyes as brown as oceans floor,  
A beauty to recognize will behold,  
Back then my dear, I would start a war and swore:

*Forever yours and thee forever mine,  
Till the sunlight ends to shine.*

# Writer's Woe

## A Girl Named Hope

by Patrick Gallaher

Monument Valley, Arizona, 1903

The sun peered over the horizon, spilling light into the valley. As the pinks and purples of the dawn gave way to the harsh blue of the day, the shadows of the vast sandstone buttes crept away from the light, revealing the rugged, dusty landscape of the American West. The stench of smoke from the train line was carried by the breeze. The only sound was the faint cry of an eagle high above.

Three horse riders broke the tranquillity. The leader was Marshall Leo Harrison, a big man of sixty years with a mane of greying hair and a tired face under his John B. Stetson. The building of the train lines meant that the Wild West was disappearing and men like Harrison were a dying breed. He had been Marshall in the county for over twenty years and it showed. Yet he rode on with purpose, flames of determination burning in his eyes and his leather duster coat billowing in the wind. On the Marshall's flanks were Seth Sidero and Hope Jerome. Seth was twenty-three with a thin face and cold, reptilian eyes that did not blink. He whooped and kicked his horse violently. Hope was black and barely seventeen but her dark eyes had seen far too much. Like most black girls, she had lost her parents early and had been forced to make her living in the saloons of the town of Tumbleweed. Her luck had changed two years prior when she met old Leo Harrison. Halfway through a hand of Texas hold 'em, he spotted her with a rowdy customer behind the bar. In the space of twenty seconds, he broke both her chain of misfortune and the joker's wrist for good measure. He took her under his wing and raised her as a deputy. A female lawman, let alone a black one, was unheard of at the time. "We do things differently in Tumbleweed," the Marshall always said and Hope always rolled her eyes. She knew that she would never be free from persecution.

The Marshall raised his fist and the trio came to a halt by the train track that cut straight through the wilderness from left to right. He sniffed, "You sure we're in the right place, Seth?"

Seth was annoyed at the question. "The crook I leaned on said them *banditos* was planning an ambush in the canyon. The train comes through any minute now."

Hope snorted, "There ain't nobody here!"

"Shut up, girlie! Know your God damned place!" hissed Seth.

"*Quiet!*" The Marshall growled. "I see the train."

There it was. Hope saw the column of smoke and heard the scream of the whistle before she laid eyes on the

steam train, a black, steel missile, hurtling across the desert towards them, screeching along the iron track. Wheels gushed steam. Sparks flew. Hope spat into the dirt before turning to the Marshall.

"It's going fast," she remarked. Marshall nodded.

"Too fast. Right, boys and girls, you know what to do." The three of them kicked their horses and started to gallop beside the track away from the oncoming train. The Marshall was in front, followed by Seth and then Hope.

"Yee-haw! I love it when we do this!" Seth screamed but his shrieking voice was drowned out as the train rushed past them. Hope kept her head down as a wave of smoke and dust rushed over them. The noise was deafening. They would only be parallel with the train for a few seconds so she had to act fast. She stood upright on the saddle, balancing herself by grasping the horse's mane at the base of its neck. Hope could not help but laugh. She was flying! The other two were invisible but she knew that they were doing the same. She glanced to the side and saw her chance: a gap between two carriages. Without thinking, Hope threw herself into the gap.

She thrashed her arms around and grabbed the side of the carriage, pulling herself through the door. She glanced back and saw the desert flashing by and three horses disappearing into the distance. So, the other two had made it aboard. She reached for her holster and flicked out a Schofield Revolver. She spun it in her hand, liking the feel of the weapon. It was the perfect weight, a part of her, merely a deadly extension of her body. Hope knew she would never be truly free but, with a gun in her hand, she was in control. She had power. Confidently, Hope advanced. She was in a deserted passenger carriage with rows of empty, wooden benches.

"Odd," she murmured.

Stalking down the central aisle, Hope strained her ears for sounds of the others but could hear nothing except the roar of the train and the wail of the wind whistling past. She peered through the window into the next carriage. What she saw caused terror to rush through her like a winter chill. Hope froze, her heart hammering uncontrollably in her chest and her blood turning to ice in her veins.

"God damn it," she whispered.

Harrison was on his knees with a group of men circling him like wolves. Their snarling faces were dark, framed by fearsome face paint. They were all wearing furs, decorated with feathers and claws. One of them was brandishing a vicious tomahawk. Indians! Hope slumped to the hard,

wooden floor, trembling. She did not feel powerful at all. What was she going to do? She was but a black barmaid in a world of white men. *What was she going to do?*

The smack of a fist against Harrison's jaw snapped Hope out of her trance. She glanced down at her little gun: seven shots. It was more than enough. It was time to be free.

She barged through the door, gun raised. *Bang. Bang. Bang. Bang. Bang. Bang.*

Six Natives fell to the floor with bullets in their chests. However, Hope Jerome felt no victory. Someone was still standing.

Seth was pointing a sawn-off shotgun at Harrison's head, a toothy grin etched on his face.

"Thanks, girlie!" Seth snickered. "I was going to kill them anyway! I only needed them for the train. It's the perfect escape vehicle. Once I've killed the old man, of course. Where will I go, I wonder? Mexico? I hear it's mighty fine this time of year. And the women! Ooh-la-la."

Harrison spat blood on Seth's boot.

"Why?" wailed Seth. "She was always your favourite! Her! What makes her so special? I lost my daddy too, you know! Hell, even these Natives had a bone to pick with you. They were hunted into the ground by us white folk. I mean, you must have pissed them off something fierce for them to steal a whole damn steam train! *What makes her so special?*"

"She's not the one pointing the gun at me," Harrison rasped. Sweat, mixed with blood, rolled down his temple and rested on the gun barrel that was pressed against it.

"Goodbye, old man," Seth murmured. He licked his lips. Then his finger moved to the trigger.

But Hope fired first.

The bullet hit Seth between the eyes. He was thrown off his feet and crashed in a heap on the floor. Nobody moved for a few seconds. They listened to the rattling of the train as it carved its way through the desert. The Marshall dragged himself to his feet.

"Well done, girl," he panted, wiping blood from his face with his sleeve. He went over to Seth and picked up the shotgun.

"I saw another Native," he rasped, "He must be the driver. I'll have to go kill him."

"No," said Hope, "I can do it."

High above, the eagle perched itself on a mountaintop and looked out at the morning sun.

## This is Me

by Ajla Šarić

When Nietzsche wrote his last book, he could have thought of a thousand titles, each more complex than the one before, but none as sufficient as when a dying man calls his final work *How One Becomes What One Is*. Therefore, I am here to contradict my title, and to say: "This is not me. I am yet to be."

I remember the false certainty of my youth, when I was content in my disdainful worldly perceptions, thinking that bearing the gift of philosophizing will turn me into some sort of a modern-day Messiah. In my writings, I was fond of presenting the human race as a sickening poison running down the veins of Mother Earth, turning it into a septic wound and festering together with it, until I looked back. The realization that I spent years targeting the wrong audience, while the one that needed to hear what I had to say was staring at me from the other side of the mirror, struck hard. It would not be misleading if I stated that the effect was more severe than the first reading of Camus' *The Stranger*, and a little bit less severe than studying any of Schopenhauer's works. I had to face the truth that being right all the time is not the best thing in the whole world, and thinking you are right all the time could very likely be one of the worst. In many aspects, I was outrageously similar to the way Marquis de Sade de-

scribed himself in one of his unsourced quotes, "... imperious, choleric, irascible, extreme in everything, with a dissolute imagination the like of which has never been seen," but in many other ways, I was not Nietzsche, Camus, nor Marquis de Sade. I was no more than another mortal walking towards imminent death, forgetting how to be herself along the way. I did not bend to satisfy the expectations of others, but the everlasting need to satisfy my own, regardless of their viciousness, has led me to a point of complete depersonalization. I was not sure what "me" was anymore, but I somehow knew that I wanted it back. I wanted to enjoy the breeze with childlike innocence, ridden of all the years that have kicked me and tossed me however they liked.

Yet, a big part of my realization was that I could not do that. Misfortunes are not there to be reversed, but rather to be utilized. I am me with all my faults, but my faults aren't me. And we often forget that the "featherless bipeds" (as Plato called us) are just as magnificent as they are rotten, and can be gracious even in the most evil of times.

# Tomato: A Proclamation of Love

By Žan Korošec

I customarily refrain from enumerating entities that would fall under the category of “*My Favourites*”, namely because I resolutely consider preferences to be fluid, thus prone to abrupt changes, consequently even immaterial. However, if I were compelled to provide a certain list of existing predilections, the lingering mildly-sweet and mouth-watering aroma of a freshly concocted tomato sauce would most undoubtedly be among them. Brand me a fanatic, a frenzied aficionado, a frantic addict, yet the infatuation here is potent, almost palpable, and unfathomable, to be honest.

To me, tomato is a scrumptiously succulent slice of sublime splendour, the ambrosial arousal of my senses that unbolts the doors to Shangri-La. As you might have already deduced, this text is more an ode to tomato than a concrete account of my preferred olfactory stimulus. For you must understand that tomato (and everything connected to it) with its intrinsic value of being ethereal, inimitably guides my mood, behaviour and actions. Lately, I have been feeling rather miserable, since garden-grown tomatoes are out of stock. But anyhow, I feel obliged to disclose this famous fable of how I got so enchanted by its scent that I can no longer function being deprived of it.

As is the case with all grand stories, this one too began in the early years of a particular child’s life. The little cherub was one day nonchalantly strolling around his grandma’s patch of tomatoes, sucking in the volatile odour that numbed the senses. Brave and ignorant as he was, he plucked one, only to discover that the pulsating red orb was too much for him to handle. Then he bit. His life has changed. In his mouth, both an implosion and explosion were occurring simultaneously, the tongue awakened from

its infantile slumber, the nose had never before inhaled so much tomato-infused air. His knees were weak, they could not support him anymore, and so he collapsed, ecstatic about the exquisite plant that is the tomato. Now, the aforementioned may be exaggerated in an aspect or two, yet the tale is far from finished. Visualise now that our befuddled cub ventured further; precisely, into the kitchen. In an enormous, industrial-size cauldron, granny was preparing tomato sauce, since the surplus of that specific vegetable posed a storage issue. The room was a crimson mist, one that could be cut into straps even by a blunt knife. He gulped the enriched air as though his very essence depended on it. It was precisely at that moment when the profound fixation sprouted up, firmly establishing its tendrils across his whole cortex.

Throughout the years, I have sniffed several said sauces, each time reliving this treasured memory. However, in all honesty, I never dawdle at merely breathing in their tang. I grab the nearest utensil designed to hold liquids and pour as much of that divine pulp into my oral cavity as anatomy permits. Needless to say, this ritual may not be pleasurable to witness, so tread vigilantly upon seeing me in close proximity to the tomato.

Tomato shares a spiritual bond with me. We are inextricably entangled, since I cannot even envision a life without this nature’s gem. Whilst it seems almost pathetic describing a mere vegetable with such elaborated compositions, I refuse to give it any less importance. Tomato is my *raison d’être*, its fragrance an intoxicating drug I cannot overdose on. Moreover, tomato is my comfort food, a generous paramour that never asks anything in return.

## Dear Diary: A Halloween Story

by Damir Rackov

Dear diary,  
I put Saidie to sleep today.

I knew that this day was bound to come – after all, she wasn’t meant to outlive me – but I still felt unprepared when the time to make the decision was upon me. I don’t even know if she understood the situation she was in. I hope she didn’t resent me because, when I made that final swing, it was as though I was looking at a human’s eyes, filled with spite. She had the unusual tendency to occasionally give me a really ‘human’ look and it was almost always a look of contempt, disgust or anger. Perhaps my behavioural measures were too severe and, given that she was a lower being, it’s not surprising that she didn’t understand the concept of advancement with strict and, as my horrified neighbours liked to call them, inhumane lessons. But they worked – my girl was always obedient.

My father always told me that when the time came, the

best way to end it would be the natural way. As nature has established the hierarchy between the two, man’s supremacy is put to use one final time by delivering the liberating touch to his suffering companion. My father wasn’t a hypocrite, therefore he carried out his duty every time a sewer-breath, as he affectionately called them, became obsolete.

In their defence, it wasn’t their fault that a vomit-inducing pungent stench was always seeping from their mouths. Father liked to feed them with organs such as the heart, liver, stomach and brain. At first, they were reluctant to try the aromatic meals but after a few behavioural stimuli they dug in.

But Death catches up with everyone and everything and even my father’s healthy cooking couldn’t keep them from perishing. As the end crept nearer, he, as a true master and leader, took their faith into his own hands and

crushed it with a sledgehammer. Metaphorically of course. In reality, he crushed their skulls.

As his son and a member of a newer, more sophisticated generation, I opted for a more humane way of execution at first – tranquilizers. Unfortunately, the doctor wouldn't give them to me, saying that no soul could possibly go to sleep and wake up the next morning after having taken such a big amount of sedatives. I immediately corrected him, saying that she had no soul and that she was practically an insomniac in a desperate need of sleep.

He apparently didn't believe me as he ordered me to exit his office with a worried and confused expression on his face.

My failed attempt at being as gentle to Saidie as possible didn't discourage me and I joyfully accepted the fact that I would have to buy the extra strong detergent for cleaning the blood spatter off my mallet.

After I finally convinced her to put her leash on, we went for our regular walk accompanied by, as always, the neighbours' judgemental looks. They never quite seemed to get used to the leash.

The first two years had been especially irritating. The whole neighbourhood shouted in shock when they saw me and Saidie for the first time. The screams "How can you do that, monster?!", "Release her or we call the police!" "Psycho!" etc. at first struck me as odd and unnecessary, but with time I became used to the publicly escalated comments and so did they to our routine. I assume they feared me, and that was why the police was never called.

As we finally arrived to the designated location Saidie became very agitated and wanted to go back, but I didn't let her, nor did I bother explaining to her the reason behind my actions. I always considered explanations as a type of apology and as her master, I didn't owe her one. In fact, she should have been grateful for the life I had enabled her. Given her physical state, only one kick to the legs was enough to bring her down.

Seeing my wife in front of me, lying on the leaf-covered ground, her whole degenerated body subtly shaking, made

me reminisce about all the wonderful years we spent together. I cannot thank my father enough for giving me all the useful advice about getting a wife and how to train her.

I almost shed a tear while recalling the beautiful past, but I saw that Saidie was recovering her strength and I had to act quickly, knowing that she was capable of mutiny. During our first year she was extremely rebellious and even attacked me once, threatening to call the police. I acted as if I had given up so that she'd lower her guard and, being the predictable woman she was, she fulfilled my expectations. That's when I taught her a lesson she has never forgotten. I still keep a part of her tongue in a vacuum-sealed jar as a reminder.

I started to steadily – but gently – cover her with mallet hits and felt her body getting more and more tender. It's astounding how even after years of training with leashes, solitary confinement and good old physical abuse, she didn't give into my dominance immediately. I got fed up with her resilience so I tightened the grip on my mallet and swung it one last time. Her head exploded.

Seeing the mess I'd done, I silently fled, leaving Saidie lying comfortably on the soft autumn ground. Being the responsible member of the town community that I was, I also contributed to the Halloween decorations of the neighbourhood that evening. I gathered all of Saidie's teeth, or what remained of them, and generously used them as ornaments for the numerous Jack-o'-lanterns. The children seemed to like them very much as the lanterns genuinely appeared frightening and they kept asking me where I had bought such realistic fake teeth. Well, Saidie really didn't smile that often and when she did I wished she would just get back to her agonized grunting and crying in the corner of the cellar.

Given that my wife passed away, I will have to re-evaluate my life, for it will soon become very lonely. I might as well acquire a dog.

## The Anniversary

by Zala Jambrović Hatić

I sit down beside her and lean back against the cool stone. It's a beautiful day, not a cloud in sight, and the sun's rays provide me with enough warmth that I'm wearing only a deep-blue shirt with the sleeves rolled up to my elbows even though it's only March.

For a few moments, I let myself enjoy the view. I've always liked coming here, to the top of the hill just outside the city. If you faced the right way, the buildings, the roads and everything else lay behind you and all you could see were the green fields that gradually changed into woods out of which grew the mountains, climbing up into the sky with their white peaks. It was an absolutely spectacular sight.

I lean forward and grab the picnic basket. "I brought wine, as always. It's your favourite, too, and it was bloody difficult to find." Pulling out the bottle, I set it on the soft grass beside me, leaning it against my leg to keep it upright. "Then we have roast beef sandwiches, homemade breadsticks and hummus, scones, jam, butter and cream, a blueberry pie and strawberries. I thought about getting some grapes as well, but figured we had more than enough food as-is."

It takes me a moment to reach the plates at the bottom of the basket. Setting them out on the ground next to us, I take out the wine glasses as well and pour the wine. I made sure everything would be perfect. This is a special



occasion, after all, and the last thing I want is for her to be disappointed.

Taking one of the sandwiches, I carefully unwrap it and put it on my plate. "I used your special recipe," I tell her, smiling. "You were quite right, the pickle makes all the difference in the world."

I dig in, leaning back as the view claims my attention once more. As I gaze into the distance, I feel like there's an invisible line separating me from the mountains and their beauty. We used to go there all the time, but it seems worlds away now. Memories come flooding back and I can see us making our way up the steep trail, laughing at what was probably one of my very bad jokes. I was never any

good at them and yet she always laughed. I feel a smile appear on my face as my memory conjures up the sweet music of her laughter, and I can see her face as clearly as if she was standing in front of me, her eyes gleaming with joy and happiness.

"Oh, Evelyn." Her name slips from my lips with such ease one would think they were made just to pronounce it.

The memories disappear and my smile fades. The tombstones around us swallow up her laughter and silence claims my world again. All I'm left with is the view, as beautiful as ever, but so unattainable it might as well be a painting on the wall.

## **"The Book Smell"**

*by Nisja Naja Resinovič*

A person's favourite smell can tell a lot about their personality, much like their clothes or hobbies. Mine reminds me of a good cup of Earl Grey, with a pinch of milk to achieve that perfect milk tea colour, a fire roaring in the fireplace and a soft blanket wrapped around my legs on the window bench. I am an undeniable swot and my favourite smell is me wrapped into a tiny package. It is a scent that always smells like vanilla and dry wood, yet has a myriad of undertones at the same time. It is the smell that envelops you when entering a library, the rich smell of old books. It is impossible to simply name it "the book smell," because old books smell very different than new ones. Opening a new book for the first time and taking a deep breath of the scent of ink and glue and *freshness* is an absolute joy; it smells like uncharted territory promised to you alone, a secret story that cannot be uncovered by anyone but you. I firmly associate it with Christmas mornings, the scent of fir and cinnamon cookies, but at its core, it remains a smell of happiness and newness - I imagine it is similar to the love for the smell of new leather.

Old books have a disparate smell. It is said that they smell different to each person, but I am convinced that every old book simply smells different. They retain the smells of their previous lives and owners - a whiff of salty air, a fragrance of a rose perfume, even the damp smell of misery

or the saccharine scent of exuberant happiness. Along with those, they bring their unique story smells, whether they be a broken promise or an incredible adventure in exotic places. It is why their smell is so fascinating - it is impossible to exactly pinpoint all of its components, but with the final combination, a story is imprinted into the reader's brain long before the story is read. This smell is why - to me - old books are more precious than new ones, as they often carry more than one story between their pages. The simple power all the peculiar scents have on imagination, enabling it to paint the most vivid and beautiful pictures, is magnificent and almost otherworldly. More than that, they enrich the reading experience - my favourite has always been a *A Secret Garden* book found in a British bookshop which smelled faintly of earth and roses, making it so much easier for me to immerse myself into the story. This is why my advice to whoever asks about books is to buy new ones, love them and fill them with memories, but also rescue old ones from the abyss of oblivion and delve into the scents they offer, the scents they are saturated with, and finally, add some of their own before passing them on to someone else. Because, who knows, maybe one day a book once held by me could bring immense joy to another reader with its smell of cinnamon and apples.

# And Now for Something Completely Different ...

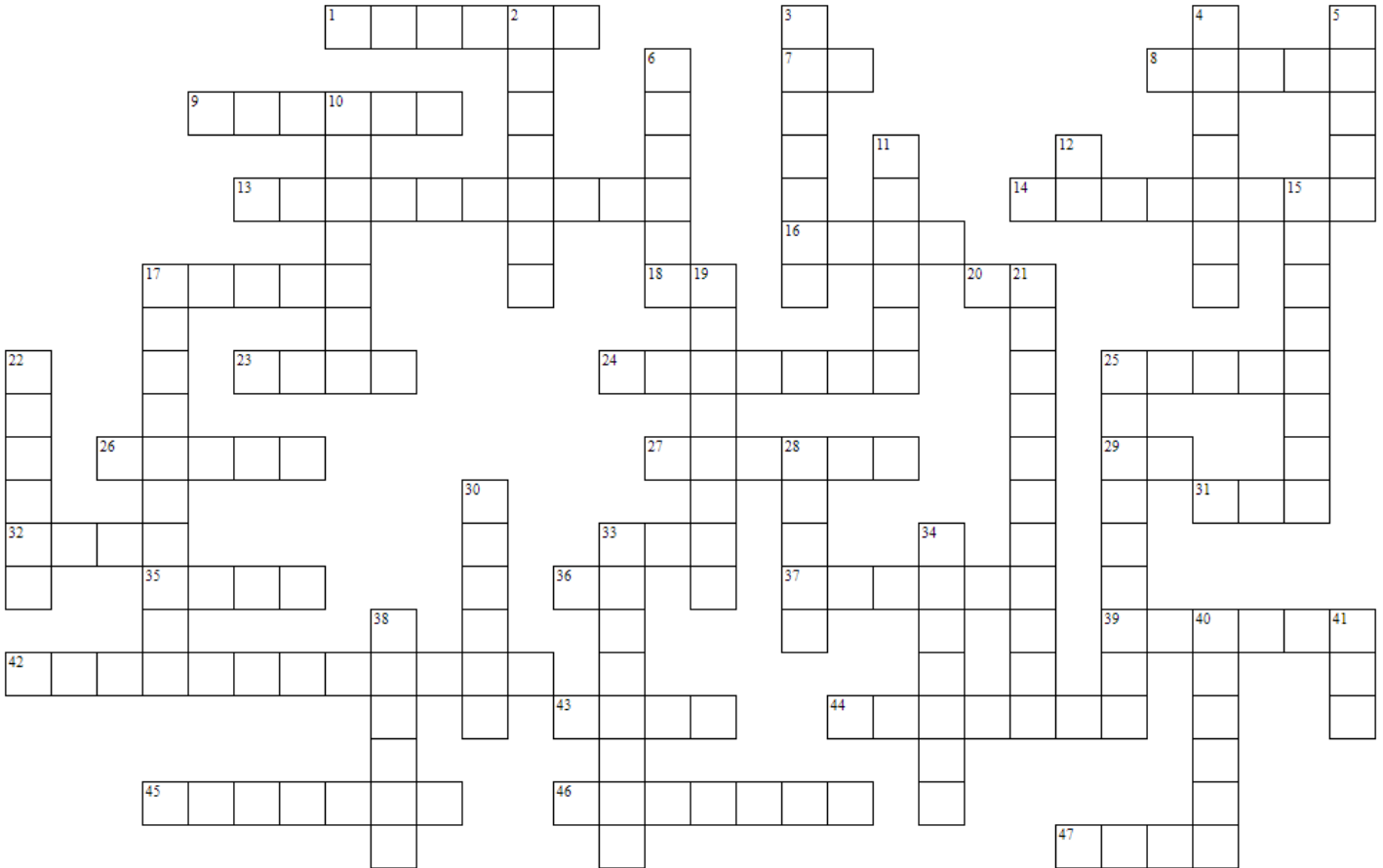
## ACROSS

1. Anonymous England-based graffiti artist
7. Abraham Lincoln
8. USA's state with Atlanta as the capital city
9. 10 English pounds
13. "Each other" is a \_\_\_\_\_ pronoun
14. The Prairie State
16. To be constantly or visibly anxious
17. "My kingdom for a \_\_\_\_\_"
18. Alexander Hamilton
20. Alexander Pope
23. \_\_\_\_\_ of the d'Urbervilles
24. "I dreamed a dream" is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_ object
25. The Great \_\_\_\_\_ Shift
26. \_\_\_\_\_ the Raven, 'Nevermore'"
27. (- U U)
29. Sodium (el.)
31. "If he wins the election, I'll eat my \_\_\_\_\_" (highly impossible to happen)
32. Mountain emergency rescue sled
33. Japanese pearl diver
35. A presentation should finish with a \_\_\_\_\_
36. Tin (el.)
37. Scotland's greatest poet: \_\_\_\_\_ Burns
39. "Tyger, Tyger burning \_\_\_\_\_"
42. Resident of Liverpool
43. Old English word for "fate"
44. IRS stands for: Internal \_\_\_\_\_ Service
45. Frankenstein was written by Mary \_\_\_\_\_
46. Lexical \_\_\_\_\_ shows the number of lexical items per clause
47. "My mistress' \_\_\_\_\_ are nothing like the sun"

## DOWN

2. He requested a pound of flesh.
3. Avenger in The Scottish Play
4. Determines how many arguments a verb can take
5. Irish poet who talked about the beans and the bees on an island
6. Famous yell from a scene in The Streetcar Named Desire
10. The most prominent syllable in an intonation unit
11. The \_\_\_\_\_ Queene
12. Chlorine (el.)
15. An individual's distinctive and unique use of language, including speech
17. "And Brutus is an \_\_\_\_\_ man!"
19. Scottish New Year's Eve
21. 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the USA's constitution started an era of \_\_\_\_\_
22. Surname of the 40<sup>th</sup> president of the USA
25. \_\_\_\_\_ Bede
28. Trail of \_\_\_\_\_
30. Old English auxiliary verb "to have"
33. Plural of "analysis"
34. Sethe rather murders her than lets her be dragged into slavery
38. The 5<sup>th</sup> prime number
40. He flew too close to the sun.
41. This is an example of a \_\_\_\_\_ question, isn't it?

# Crossword Conundrum



*The editorial team would like to express gratitude to all who participated in this year's issue. The pages you have just read could not be filled with such sensational material without the assistance of the department's lecturers, collegial contributors, and of course, you, loyal and enthusiastic readers.*

