

ARTS & SCIENCE STUDENT MAGAZINE

THE Melange



**VOLUME 3 NO. 5
FEBRUARY 2023**

THE MELANGE MANIFESTO

VISION STATEMENT

Our vision is for The Melange to be a light-hearted and enjoyable read, to shine light on what constitutes the Artsci experience (in terms of our formal degrees, but also in terms of day-to-day goings-on!), and to bring Artsci students together to appreciate each other's written and visual talent.

We want The Melange to be a positive force within the Artsci community; as such, we do not accept or publish submissions that are discriminatory or hateful. There is room for thoughtful critique or for kind-hearted teasing in the name of humour or satire, but there is not room for pieces that insult anyone, are hurtful, or perpetuate racism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, ageism, or religious discrimination. We also want all information published in The Melange to be factual, correct, and clear; please note that fact-checking and resulting edits for non-fiction pieces will be included in the editorial process.

CONTENT GUIDELINES

- Think about The Melange and all of its content as aiming to be **community-building**: when designing your submission, check with yourself: "Is this contribution supportive of my Artsci community?" (though your contribution doesn't have to be about Artsci!)
 - If you want to create a piece on a faculty member, admin, student, or alumni, please get their consent (and evidence of consent, to show our editors) for the specific way in which you will be portraying them before you create or submit your piece.
 - Note: Merely referring to an individual in passing (i.e., when they're not the subject of your piece) doesn't require formal consent, but please note that The Melange's editors reserve the right to edit these names out of a piece if their inclusion is inappropriate.
 - Please aim to keep submissions under two pages maximum/1000 words. We will assess submissions on a case-by-case basis, but generally we are looking for short pieces.
- We accept poetry, short stories, comic strips, recipes, humour and satire, book reviews, reflections, visual art, fun riddles or crossword puzzles, and any other categories of submissions you come up with! Be as creative as you want! We can't wait to enjoy your work :)

SUBMISSION AND EDITORIAL PROCESS

Submissions should be sent exclusively to themelangebyartsci@gmail.com. Please attach your submission to the email as a Word Document or Google Doc, and indicate in your message what type of submission it is (e.g. "historical fiction comic strip" or "interview with an Artsci alumnus"). If yours is a written piece, feel free to attach any images you would like to accompany it on the page or provide suggestions for accompanying illustrations for our team of artists to take on!

One of our editors will contact you directly within a few days of the contribution deadline to notify you whether there is space for your piece in the upcoming issue or whether we will need to save it for a future issue. If your piece is accepted, there will be a specific editorial timeline. We reserve the right to reject submissions if they do not follow our content guidelines.

Editors will work one-on-one with contributors to edit their pieces. There will be an initial round of edits, which the editor will return as feedback to the creator for any necessary or suggested revisions. A final draft will be sent from the creator back to the editor, who then will complete final touch-ups. Please be available to make revisions to your piece in the week following the contribution deadline, since our turnaround time for edits will be quick!

WIN A PRIZE BY DOING THIS SIMPLE HACK!

It's not clickbait, readers: as a special thank you for being such dedicated fans, we've devised a quest for you. Somewhere in this issue, we've hidden the Melange logo (pictured here): be the first to find it to win a signature Melange button! Send an email to themelangebyartsci@outlook.com telling us where you found it for your chance to win. Happy perusing!



VOLUME 3 NO. 5

THE MELANGE



Morning walk to the gym, January 2023

Reader, it is February – what a weird month, eh? It's got the stress of midterms paired with the relief of reading week, what feels like 8 total hours of sunlight paired with clear nights and a comet passing by on February 1st (did you catch it?). It's a long, slow month, with weeks of cold preceding it and little hope for warmth to come. It's a time of year I often glaze over, worn out by the second round of endless deadlines, classes, and loads of laundry.

In April, I'll be graduating. This thought is paralyzing, and do you know what, reader? I could do with a long, slow month to savour. In the midst of the bone-chilling wind tunnel that is the route to campus I walk every day, I could do with a moment to appreciate the illuminated stairwells of the Children's Hospital, the breathy creak of the HSR, the look of my new tattoo (hi mom), and the snippets of absolutely unhinged conversations I catch as I pass by other overwhelmed students.

And maybe that's a lie. Maybe I won't appreciate it, and I'll only be thinking about how cold my hands are. Don't judge me. But the principle remains: cold, gray days give us time to look around and see the bright spots that we might not have noticed otherwise.

If you're reading this issue on its release date, you're probably thinking about all the catchup sleep that's going to happen over reading week, and all the catchup reading that's not. If I can offer a suggestion: find something to savour while you rot away in your bed. It could be a cup of tea, a new TV show, or (not to be presumptuous) the newest issue of the Melange.

I present to you a series of words, images, and designs for you to snuggle up with and enjoy right before your epic reading week nap. Or don't—they'll be here when you wake up.

All my love,
Charlotte Johnston & the Melange Editorial Team

BROUGHT TO YOU BY

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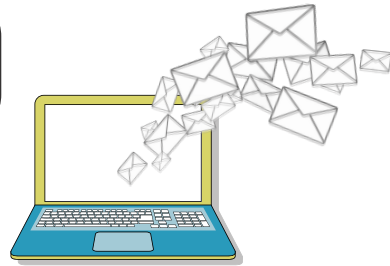
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A DETAILED REVIEW OF MELANGE SPAM EMAILS



As the general submissions monitor for this magazine, I have the unique privilege of monitoring the melangebyartsci@outlook.com inbox. While my favourite emails to receive are content submissions (PLEASE SUBMIT TO, and I cannot emphasize this enough, THE MELANGE! IT IS SO FUN!), another genre of email that is close to my heart is the absurd spam email. These emails are as unobtrusive as they are unsolicited. I enjoy parsing through the sometimes boring, sometimes silly, and sometimes unnerving spam emails, but I recently realized that these emails are not just for me; they are sent to the Melange, so presumably they're meant for our readership. As such, I feel it is my duty to share with you, dear readers, some of these personalized messages from our sweet, cunning, and very persistent spam regulars. What follows are some brief reviews of my personal favourites among the spams.

NEW MESSAGE

TO melangebyartsci@outlook.com
SUBJECT **Member! YOU'RE OUR WINNER?!**

So simple, yet so effective. I appreciate the thoughtful use of capitalization here, though my favourite part of this message is its punctuation. The only thing I love more than corporations being excited that I've won something is corporations being unsure if I've won something, but excited for me nonetheless. Are we their winner? When did we become a member? We may never know?!

NEW MESSAGE

TO melangebyartsci@outlook.com
SUBJECT **Lucille Household breakdowns happen..**

This is a wonderful subject line for which you need some context. Most of our spam emails are directed at valued customers or beloved members – loving, yet nondescript. However, about 30% of our spam emails are addressed to one of two individuals: Elizabeth or Lucille. Based on the spam emails sent to each of them, I've gained enough insight into these most likely non-existent people to form a coarse profile of each of them. Here's what we know: Elizabeth has gotten into multiple fender benders over the past year and has a propensity for ordering packages and never picking them up. The way I see it, there's a little bit of Elizabeth in all of us. Lucille, whose main interests include guns, finding ways to carry guns without a permit, and skincare, is a much more elusive character. When we get a Lucille email, I pay attention.

In a cruel twist of fate, this intriguing and lightly threatening subject line was attached to a blank email, leaving me with so many questions. Is this a warning? A prediction? Is the incomplete ellipsis a metaphor? Why did they use Lucille's name like that? Was the lack of comma between Lucille and Household on purpose, and if so, what does that mean? What are household breakdowns, and how often do they happen? If Lucille is a real person, I hope they're doing okay.

NEW MESSAGE

TO melangebyartsci@outlook.com
SUBJECT **DELIVERY OF THE SUSPENDED PACKAGE**
You have (1) package waiting for delivery. Use your code track it and receive it.



First things first, I LOVE the logo. This font is straight out of a James Bond movie and paired with the ominous delivery notice, it's giving sneaking into a mysterious garage and doing a few shoulder rolls to retrieve your SUSPENDED PACKAGE in stealth (can you tell I've never seen a James Bond movie?). Where they lose me, though, is that last sentence. There are either two fewer commas or one less "to" than would be ideal for clarity. Despite this minor grammatical blip, the thrill of this email shines through, and for that, I treasure it.

NEW MESSAGE

TO melangebyartsci@outlook.com

Start the New Year with a Walk-in Bathtub

[CLICK HERE](#)

My favourite thing about this email is that this is literally the whole email. While I admire the Walk-in Bathtub Shop marketing team's air-tight concision, I am most impressed by their confidence. These guys know that they don't need shiny pictures or glowing user testimonies to get people interested in their walk-in bathtubs – the product speaks for itself. All we consumers need is a simple instruction: start the new year with a new tub. Gladly! Don't mind if I do! They're selling gold and we're buying it.

NEW MESSAGE

TO melangebyartsci@outlook.com

All Emails From bengqmkwziguylmystzp@bengqmkwziguylmystzp.ybvaacguzbjhcgyl.inps.it

Sometimes, an email's content pales in comparison to its sender. Such is the case with any and all emails from bengqmkwziguylmystzp@bengqmkwziguylmystzp.ybvaacguzbjhcgyl.inps.it. Anytime I find an email from this address in our Melange inbox, I am pummeled with a feverish urge to shout the address ten times fast. I'm sure you feel it too. Do it with me, wherever you are. You won't be more alarming than I am:

- bengqmkwziguylmystzp@bengqmkwziguylmystzp.ybvaacguzbjhcgyl.inps.it
- bengqmkwziguylmystzp@bengqmkwziguylmystzp.ybvaacguzbjhcgyl.inps.it
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It never quite rolls off the tongue. The multiple dot-somethings after the @ only add to the address's elegance. The joy that this email address evokes in me earns it its place in Melange inbox history.

Emily O'Halloran
Level V

婆婆

I cannot write your name, nor my mother's or father's. I just realized. I'm sorry
I never call home, I never ask about your day
every conversation we have is interspersed with my English and my confusion and
a disconnect that we can never seem to cross.
I just realized, I don't know what I'm sorry is in Cantonese, in this context.

I'm scared
one day you'll be gone and I'll realize I knew nothing about you or your life
and you, nothing about my dreams and passions
I want to call, I want to talk to you
but I don't know how when I can't understand half the words you use
I'm sorry
I don't know what I love you is in Cantonese, because 我爱你 doesn't sound right,
and I'm terrified you don't know how much you mean to me.

I can hear the sound of your voice and trace the crooked, jutting joints of your hands in my mind
(They're both only memories for now. I miss you.)
I don't know how to tell you
you are the one person in my family I always felt loved me unconditionally
when I couldn't bear facing my parents,
when being inside their house suffocated me.
I don't know why I can't stop crying. I miss you. I don't know how to communicate this to you.
I just realized I don't know what I miss you is in Cantonese.
That would be fine, except I know even less how to say everything else.

I never want you to think I don't love you.
Please know I love you.
I'm so ashamed that I can't figure out how to tell you all of this
I'm so ashamed I can't understand half of your stories.
I want to know. I want you to know me.

If I handed this to you, you wouldn't be able to read it.
All of 公公's diaries that you kept, all of your diaries that you still write, I can't read. In the end we always come back to the same point.
婆婆, when I go back home and struggle through trying to tell you—everything, that I love you,
and miss you—I hope you understand what I mean anyway.



Words by Alice Qiu,
Level I
& Art by Ally Pei-
Middleton,
Level I

DEAR OMA



Victoria D'Anna,
Level II

WHAT I CAN'T ADMIT TO MY IMMIGRANT PARENTS

"What if I can't make it?"

"You can do it. I know you will."

What if I don't?

I know that too. But what if I don't? What if it's my fault?

I'm sorry. I know you're afraid. I am, too.

I'm sorry I haven't yet made anything of this life worth the weight of your pain. Your pain, that plagues you every day and night and aches your bones and drowns your lungs and is written in the margins of all your paperwork and settles in your teeth like molasses and coats your eyes with tears that refuse to fall. Your pain, that you've always hidden under the pretense of 'how it is'. I know, now, that it's there. I know that it hurts.

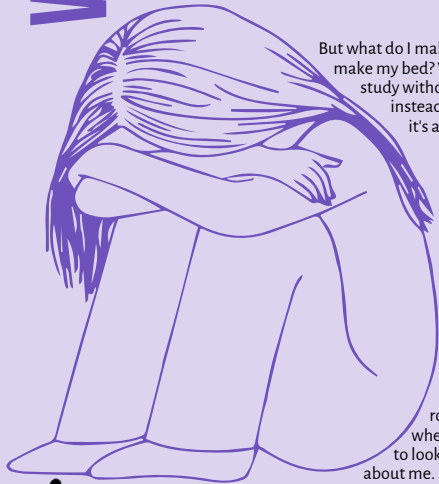
I know I'm the manifestation of all the hopes and dreams you've ever dared to have. I know you have lived your whole life for me.

But what do I make of that when I can't get up on time in the morning? When I don't always make my bed? When I let the phone screen burn my brain out? When I can't get myself to study without hours of tribulation first? When I settle instead of strive? When I grieve instead of repair? When I can't see myself making anything better for myself and it's all my fault?

When admitting any of these things to you is the thing I'm most afraid of, in case it shatters you? My inadequacy has made me a liar. I can't tell you how sorry I am.

But please, don't lose faith in me.

I can learn to wake up earlier. I can learn how to drive. I can learn to make rounder rotis. These things, I can do. As long as it makes you feel like I'm where you want me to be. As long as you can be assured. I want you to be able to look at me and, if even for a moment, feel at peace. I don't want you to worry about me.



But, I will still be settling instead of striving. Grieving instead of repairing. Not being able to see myself making it better. These things, I can't fix as easily. In the long run, where consequences exist, you'll know how weak I've really been, despite waking up early and cleaning up after myself and knowing how to cook. And there will be no peace for you to gain from that knowledge.

So, what if I don't make it? What if I can't make it and it's my fault?

You've given me everything I could ever need to be successful. Your body has become a husk from sacrificing all its blood, sweat, and tears in that process. You are living your life for me—and I live mine for you. I don't care what happens to me. I don't give a shit. I just want you to feel fulfilled. For your life to have not been a waste. To make it somewhere, somewhere good, for you.

You would have been a much greater asset to this world than I can be, had it given you a chance. I can't handle that chance being me.

I don't want to fail you. I don't want to fail you. I don't want to fail you.

But what if I do, and it's all my fault?

I'm sorry. I'm so, so, sorry.

"You can do it. I know you will."

"Okay. Thank you."

"I know you can."

"I know. I love you."

"I love you too."

Ishmeet Johal,
Level I



LOST OR FOUND



Jadyn Westenberg,
Level II

What does it mean to be lost? To be found?

When I was little, I used to think of 'lost' as adventurous, fun, something more good than bad, because you only got lost in stories if you were exploring somewhere new.

When I got older, I wanted to get lost in a forest, a wilderness without trails, to see if I could get myself out of there. Maybe it was more about finding myself, now that I think about it, but in order to find yourself you must be lost. Unfortunately for me, I still have never gotten lost like that...

Now, I like to think about what it means to be lost, and I try to get lost in the basements of the Arts Quad. What could it mean to be lost alone, or lost surrounded by others? What does it even mean to be lost at all? Are you lost if you don't know where you are, mentally or physically, but are perfectly okay with it? Or is lost always accompanied by a feeling of panic? I think it's nicer to be lost and be okay with it.

Why is it that I want to be lost? Do I feel lost, or do I think I should feel lost? Or am I obsessed with lost because I am lost, but if one is lost, one can be found? Do I want to be found?

While 'lost' intrigues me, I can't say I care as much about what it might mean to be found. Perhaps because I'm not quite there yet. Maybe I don't want to be found yet, but I suspect I might never be, and that thought doesn't bother me.

I can't deny that it is nice to find that someone else knows you. When they tell you a bit about yourself, and you're like, 'that's completely true', or, 'I'd never thought of myself that way, but you're right'. And you feel like someone else has found you, just for a moment, a piece of you that they found like a piece of driftwood in the ocean. It doesn't remain in view for long before drifting back into the waves, but there was a brief moment of clarity.

Maybe that's all 'found' is. Brief moments in the lostness of life. Sometimes it seems that to be found is a superficial safe haven compared to all the depths wherein one can get lost. Never anything more than driftwood floating on the crest of a wave before being pulled under again. Can anyone be completely and truly found?

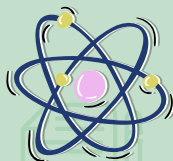
I like to imagine 'found' is like a little cozy bear cave, protecting you (the bear) from whatever's out there in the world. But it's a small cave, not much more than rock and maybe a little fire, and if you want anything more than this, you're going to have to leave. Maybe this cave is much deeper than I think, but if you keep going far enough back, deeper and deeper into the darkness, you'll find that you're as lost as if you really had left your cave.

If you think a little too hard about that fact that you have been found, and what exactly makes it that you are found, you will find it eludes you. You will find that you have become quite lost again, deep within the cave you think will protect you. Maybe there really is a scarier bear in the cave than you.

That's not to say I don't believe we can be found. The concept exists, so it mustn't be impossible. Objects can be found again, so why not us? But more so, I think that no matter how much one thinks they have been found, everyone is just forever a little lost. The cave of 'found' is blurry at the edges, the driftwood moving, impermanent. And that's not a bad thing.

Alyssa Abush,
Level I

THE NUANCES OF THE ARTSCI THESIS



THE NUANCES OF THE ARTSCI THESIS

Because of the interdisciplinary nature of Artsci, our thesis options are practically limitless. This excess of freedom is equal parts thrilling and daunting, and leaves many of us wondering: where do I start? In hopes of gaining a greater understanding of the nuances of the Artsci thesis, I interviewed four upper-year Artscis who are currently working on theirs. These illuminating conversations gave me a greater appreciation of the diversity of potential approaches. I will now share some key insights with you.

THE INTERVIEWEES

Maya Erikson (they/them), Level IV, uncombined (minoring in Environment & Society)
Thesis Topic: The history of Trans representation in horror film

Tess Vosper (she/her), Level IV, uncombined (minoring in Psychology)
Thesis Topic: The influence of memory, imagination, and imagery on sports imagery and performance

Sharang Sharma (he/him), Level IV, uncombined
Thesis Topic: Marx and classical and political economy

Rachel Mery (she/her), Level V, uncombined (minoring in Anthropology)
Thesis Topic: Body image and biological indicators of aging in older female-identifying athletes



KEY TAKEAWAYS



1. "Just start."

That's Maya's first word of advice. Though two semesters may seem like an eternity from the outset, they pass by quickly, and it's easy to overestimate the time you have or underestimate how much you need to get done. Likewise, it can be tempting to get hung up on making everything perfect, especially for those of us with perfectionistic tendencies (so, like, 98% of Artscis). Don't let your perfectionism inhibit your progress. "I saw a tweet: 'the worst dissertation is the one you never write,'" Maya told me. "And someone said, 'and then I proceeded to write the second worst dissertation.' That's what I keep in mind whenever I get held back: 'I'm going to go write the second worst dissertation and I'm going to have a great time doing it.'"

2. Choose something you're passionate about.

Rachel advises not to choose something just because you think it's what you should do. You'll be working on this project for a whole year, so do something that you'll enjoy. If you're passionate about your work, it will shine through, and that will reflect well on you. Besides, your Artsci thesis is a unique opportunity. "If someone has an unorthodox idea, they should seize it," Rachel told me. You may never again have this much freedom in an academic setting, so make the most of the opportunity.

3. There are many ways you can approach your thesis, and each is equally valuable.

The interviewees' approaches to choosing their thesis topics were varied. Tess's topic was influenced by her post-grad aspirations. To be considered for her programs of choice, she needs to complete a research thesis. She feels that this requirement has somewhat limited her freedom by forcing her to modify her topic to suit the needs of her supervisor and co-researcher. Nonetheless, she feels it has been a valuable experience which will benefit her in post-grad. Conversely, Maya treated their thesis as a "passion project": an opportunity to study something they're deeply interested in, even though it doesn't necessarily relate to their post-grad aspirations. Sharang's choice was partially driven by a personal goal: to force himself to read the things he'd been meaning to read, such as Marx's *Capital*, which is a massive work. His thesis gave him the perfect opportunity to devote time to this project. Rachel's choice to pursue a research-based topic was driven by both her interest in aging and her desire to determine if she liked research before considering post-grad schooling and careers.

Whether you treat your thesis as a passion project, a step towards your post-grad studies, or something else entirely, each approach has value. As Maya told me, "It's your thesis for a reason; the process is going to be unique to you, and that's a strength, not a weakness."

4. Your topic may change a lot, and that's okay.

Most of the interviewees have made countless modifications to their thesis topics. In some cases, after starting with grandiose ideas that they soon realized were over-ambitious for a six-credit thesis, they had to modify their topic into something more feasible. Others were constrained by their resources and had to adjust their topics accordingly. Yet others realized that their interests had developed after doing initial research. The takeaway? Let your thesis evolve naturally. If your initial idea sticks, great! If it changes twenty times, also great!

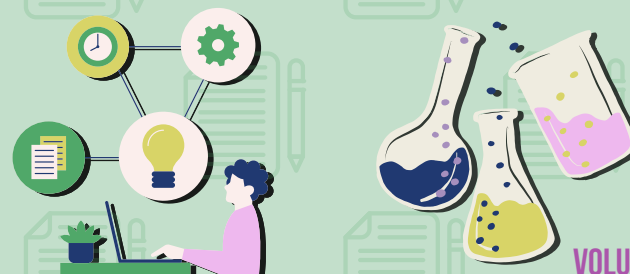
5. Make the most of your thesis supervisor.

Try to find a supervisor whose work style suits your needs. For Maya, this meant working with a supervisor who would suggest – but never impose – ways to approach their project. For Rachel, this meant finding someone who was understanding, but firm when needed. For Sharang, it meant finding a prof who would let him work at his own pace. Of course, it may not work out this way for you. Regardless, your supervisor is an invaluable resource, and you should use them to their full potential by maintaining open communication. Try to be prepared for your meetings, but if you're not, be honest with your supervisor. Don't lie about how much you've gotten done, Rachel says; most of the time, they'll be understanding.

6. "Your thesis doesn't need to change the world."

Sharang told me. His thesis mostly involves going through what people have already written; his goal in engaging with primary texts is to better critique capitalism in his own life, rather than to generate new ideas. You don't have to contribute new knowledge. You'll have plenty of time to advance your thinking later; this isn't your only chance. Also, your thesis is not going to singlehandedly determine whether you get into grad school. Maya shared a piece of advice from their mom: most grad schools are more interested in the fact that you did a thesis than the details of your project. Just the process of completing an undergrad thesis, no matter your topic or outcome, is a valuable experience.

Olly Griesbach,
Level III



I HAVE NOTHING TO WRITE

Last night, when I tore my idols from the wall
They sang in wordless echoes
Of words I wished I saw before they spoke them

There's a boy I know who writes on walls
And I don't remember anything he ever said
His voice is just mine reading in my head

Recently, I remembered that I have less to say
And less to write
And less to crucify upon my walls

My printing has regressed into knotted loops
Like childish curls on a little girl's neck
I wait to steal the whispered vignettes
of the poets and lovers and children again

Isabel Richards,
Level I

POLAROID PAIN

I am looking at the same photos
Seeing the same smile,
The gleaming eyes and our childish grins.
Our lives have been endless beanstalks,
Casting a shadow over the past,
Stretching into a cloudless, infinite sky.
So old, so solid,
Yet so green in every fiber of its being.
How could we have fallen, when we wanted to climb?
How could we have lost track of the daylight
As we stared at the stars,
When we kept comfortable hours of sleep?
How deep could we have dove,
If we had reached as far inside as we strove to soar?
I wonder no more what may have been,
For I esteem the certainty of one thing.

This perfect little frame is cracked,
The glass lays sparkling on ashy oak planks.
The air is stale in this old attic;
A brash contrast to the fruitful daze my dreamy gaze assumes
As I assume the role of a braver soul;
Of someone who took the horses by the reins,
And rode off into an uncertain sunset.

Forgive me for lacking the faith,
For losing sight of the courage,
To unfold this moon-high stack of a single letter;
Even though it would be most natural;
Even though it would be most fair;
Even though it would be as you told me I should;
I got lost in the fear of losing a friend.

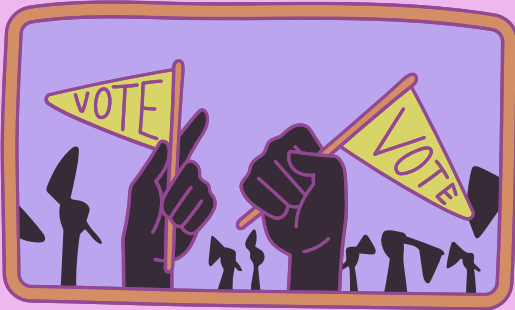
So as I cradle a paper with creases and stains
From each time I have shattered this essential frame,
And cried a tear for each vow from which I did abstain.
I know you may not remember me;
I know you may no longer smile,
But that wishful gaze you gave to me,
Shall live forever in my memory;
Petrified in perfect poise and pleasantry;
As I fetally curl and hold you between my knees,
In polaroid pain.

Anonymous,
Level I



Kristen Rasmussen,
Level III

MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD: A LOOK INTO STUDENT GOVERNMENT



Amidst the McMaster Student Union (MSU) presidential election, I realized that I had very little knowledge about how the MSU works. To learn more, I reached out to Monica Yeom, the Arts & Science Student Representative Assembly (SRA) member, and Priya John, who is an SRA Observer.

To establish an understanding of the MSU, note that this organization is a union representing all full-time McMaster undergraduate students. The MSU offers clubs and services including, but not limited to, the Emergency First Response Team, The Silhouette, and the Student Walk Home Attendant Team. According to the MSU website, it promotes "political representation" and "the enhancement of student life." Monica describes the overall goal of the MSU as advocating for the interests of students, therefore continually bettering the experience of Mac students on campus.

Monica explains that each faculty has a caucus of elected SRA representatives, proportional to the program population. Artsci has one SRA member (Monica!) and one SRA Observer (Priya!), whose terms last from September 2022 to March 2023. In these positions, Monica and Priya address concerns of undergraduate students, hold referenda (decisions voted on by SRA members and MSU executives, regarding whether services should be in our tuitions), and report their Year Plan progress. At meetings where referenda are held, in addition to SRA members and SRA Observers, student and recently graduated MSU executives, as well as other full-time staff, are in attendance. SRA members have voting power, whereas the SRA observers do not.

When amendments, propositions, and voting occur in relation to MSU services, the interests of students are represented by their respective SRA members. The SRA's role is to propose new ideas and vote on which services should be included in the MSU fee (which comes out of our tuition). SRA members act on the needs of their constituents. Monica, therefore, votes in elections and proposes ideas based on the desires of Artsci students.

The MSU is important because it has a wide-reaching impact. For example, any club you want to start, or any student service you want to take part in, is impacted by the MSU. Monica explains that part of our tuition goes toward MSU services and initiatives. Students, therefore, deserve a say in where this money goes.

Another aspect of student government that Artscis should be aware of is SASS. SASS is the Society of Arts & Science Students, and all Artscis are part of it. The executive team of this organization (known as SASSEx) oversees the organizing and facilitating of SASS events, ranging from socials to programming to academic support.

There are key differences between the MSU and SASSEx. The MSU is focused on issues/services that impact the entire McMaster community, whereas SASSEx particularly focuses on issues that affect Arts & Science students. However, these two organizations work together, which is where Priya's role as SRA Observer comes in. Priya works closely with Monica, attending MSU meetings as a non-voting member. She then relays the information from the MSU meetings back to SASSEx, where she is a voting member. Priya also relays information from SASSEx to Monica, helping both groups to represent the views of Artsci students.

Each year, individual faculty caucuses create a year plan. Priya and Monica collaborated to create this detailed list of goals that they hope to accomplish. This year, their plan has four goals:

1. Free menstruation products in all washrooms in MUSC.
2. Adding more HSR/GO buses.
3. Keeping silent study spaces silent.
4. Increasing study spaces and including more extension cords.

Monica explains that though these goals seem ambitious, they can also carry over into future years. For example, goal #1 is a continuation of an SRA project that was started by last year's SRA member, Vikita Mehta. Priya adds that long-term goals are also broken up into smaller steps and can be built upon to ultimately achieve success. For example, to begin working on goal #3, Monica and Priya are collecting data on disturbances that arise in silent study spaces – if you are interested in volunteering to help with this data collection, reach out to them! Monica also notes that, in relation to the HSR/GO goal, they are currently tracking peak bus hours to better understand student travel.

The SRA also has a special project fund, which any MSU member can apply for. The \$6,500 fund can be applied across various fields of interest, including, as noted on the SRA Instagram, "projects related to year plans, advocacy, events or any other student betterment special projects". This fund is a great opportunity for Arts & Science students to consider, and Monica and Priya highlight that they would be open to any questions students might have!

For Monica and Priya, keeping students engaged and informed about the SRA is very important. They primarily use Instagram (@sraartsci) and email for communication. Priya explains that she knows how busy students can get, and she uses Instagram to provide quick updates about important details, initiatives and opportunities for involvement, turning to e-mail for longer messages. Additionally, office hours are hosted every week, and there are plans to host future transitional sessions for those considering the role. The goal of these sessions is to ensure that anyone who wants to consider running for SRA has enough information!

Monica and Priya both found that talking to previous SRA members and SRA observers was essential in helping them develop the passion for the role and a better understanding of the intricacies of the position. They drew inspiration from Adeola Egbeyemi's reflection, "Everything Wrong with the SRA," an important read that highlights why students should care about the SRA. This piece draws attention to the areas for improvement, as well as providing concrete recommendations. Monica noted that the piece: "really opened [her] eyes to how, even in student government, there is still injustice and there is still room for change, and there can be problems [even amidst] the great things that the SRA does". In addition to receiving guidance from Adeola, both Priya and Monica credit former SRA members and SRA Observers Jess Kim, Vikita Mehta, and Audrey Wu, with helping them through the process and allowing them carry on the important work.

Outside Sources

- MSU info page: <https://msumcmaster.ca/info/>
- MSU services page: <https://msumcmaster.ca/service/>
- SASS info page: <https://www.artsci.ca/about>
- Everything Wrong with the SRA: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/hUlgofjhKl7s-HrsOOioGJ6mcbGClwC4Z57fyIU5W-Rg/edit?usp=sharing>

Camille Lisser,
Level II



BEFORE YOUR BONES FUSE TOGETHER:

Before your bones fuse together
 Before you wake up sore with age and ripe with vigour from opportunity
 Before you're spoiled by how many options your future holds
 Before you're soured by how many ways your brain tells you it can go wrong
 Before your bones fuse together

Is there room between them for my love
 Is there enough of a gap for you to let me in
 Is there space that can allow for softness
 Before we are hardened by what's to come
 Before our frontal lobes finish their formation
 Is there time for you to feel as intensely as you do
 As I long to right now
 Before we become sick with afflictions justified by our age
 Before we can no longer drink after midnight and pretend to not feel it in the morning
 And have that willing ignorance be not only a fraction of our resilience
 The rest now is pure
 Pure strength
 Before we can't stay up burning the midnight oil
 Fearing that we are in fact most creative at unholy hours
 —isn't that sacred —
 in and of itself
 Sacrilegiously so, I'd argue
 This point is but one example of the ideas we only hold late into the morning
 The passion that can only come from sleeplessness
 Wholeheartedly choosing to avoid what they say you need
 To pursue what you know you want

Tomorrow you would have needed the sleep
 Ten years from now you'll need the memories
 Ten years from now you'll have to go to sleep
 Tomorrow's memories are the ones you'll cling to

Late nights last long but are shorter in hindsight
 Their longevity in memory despite brevity of moment
 Some other moments come to mind:
 The way you moved beside me
 The music filled my ears as you filled my mind
 For just a moment in time
 Cinematic enigmatic
 Earnest cliché
 Movie magic
 Main character
 Well everyone is of their own lives
 What a good crossover episode that night was
 Ignite again, sometime soon?
 While we still can
 Before we grow old of one another instead of with each other
 We know what the future holds
 Wholeheartedly choosing to avoid what they say we need

To pursue the present you know you want

Before your bones fuse together
 Before your frontal lobes fully form
 And you won't see me as much
 Or as sparkly as before

Waiting in the station to go home
 Wondering where that will be a year from now
 And who it will be with, in ten
 Who will I call home
 In addition to my own body
 Who will be home and who will build it with me

But for now I'll watch the sun set on us a few times over
 Cause it's a good way to fill the time
 We're not going anywhere right now
 But we're going everywhere soon
 So we'll fizzle out like we've done before
 After we reignite the flame
 Someday we'll burn out for good
 Maybe we'll die with passion
 Or one last final blast
 But likely it will be more banal
 A simple passage of time
 And weakening intensity
 As my bones fuse together
 My frontal lobes form
 And I become more practical
 More rational
 Wiser with waning whimsy
 I hope to never lose the earnestness though
 And make meaning in the meantime
 You can share that meaning
 You could be my meantime
 Sometime soon?

Youth is wasted on the young, they say
 Can we waste some time together?
 Before our bones fuse together
 And our souls fission apart

Dani Wohl,
 Level III

Ally Pei-Middleton
 Level I



RUNNING ON SENTENCES

Before I learned to write, I learned to speak and to recite which, I guess looking back, has had some effect on my writing—

don't get me wrong: I learned the basics of grammar,

and I passed English class but all of what I learned for writing followed what I learned for reciting, meaning some things were off: like when to use a comma

because I was taught you breathe when you see a comma so, of course, you must always add a comma when you feel you should,

breathe

(but that's not right, right?)

and while your brain is oxygenated your sentence is spliced, I've made this mistake before but how can I help it when I need air in my lungs

and full sentences keep coming out of my head: they flow like draining baths, like magicians' scarves, like spilled sprinkles, and they keep going and going and going and then

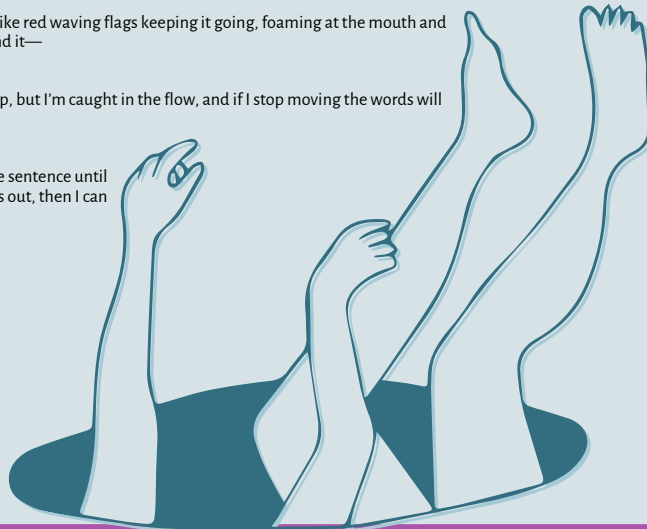
I realize—I'm running on sentences—it's hard to stop them once they've started, just like a bull in a ring

and the red wavy lines on the screen are like red waving flags keeping it going, foaming at the mouth and chomping at the bit and I know I could end it—

I can make it stop; I just need to add a stop, but I'm caught in the flow, and if I stop moving the words will pull me under, and I keep

running on: catching up: holding onto the sentence until the thought is out, on the paper, when it's out, then I can stop.

Tess Macdonald,
Level III



AN ARTSCI'S CALENDAR

MON	TUES	WED	THURS	FRI	SAT	SUN
February 13				The Melange February Issue Launch! 16	Reading week begins! 17	Video games assignment #1 Pisces season begins :) 19
Family day 20	Mardi gras 21	Ash Wednesday 22	Sleep 23	Sleep 24	Sleep 25	Frantically attempt to do all the work assigned over break 26
Argumentation midterm 27	Indig midterm 28	SPT midterm 1	Physics quiz #4 Global justice research statement + annotated bibliography 2	Crash 3	Revive Visit paisley coffeehouse to celebrate this victory 4	Video games project design document Visual culture project proposal + annotated bibliography 5
Solve world hunger, tell no one 6	Stats assignment #3 Purim 7	Revenge bedtime procrastination 8	Wrack brains to remember if there are any assignments you've forgotten about 9	Conclude that answer is no 10	Remember an assignment suddenly and frantically try to complete it before the deadline 11	Lose an hour of sleep :(12
Buy formal ticket 13	National pi day (the kind *without* an e) 14	Argumentation short assignment 3 Exploring Hamilton bus ride dug 15	Buy artsci musical ticket 16	Stats midterm #2 Video games assignment #2 st. pattie's 17		

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

February 23rd

Aaaand, it's that time again: The Melange is seeking submissions for our March issue! This issue's theme is -time-, and it will be in black and white to give it that retro look. It's also our last issue of the year, folks: that means it's your last chance until September to submit something to our humble magazine. Don't miss it! Finally, did someone say something about a print issue??? You didn't hear it from me, but this issue may be hitting more than just your inbox...

If you're looking for some inspiration, a time-themed piece could be: a "retro"-spective; a Doctor Who fanatic; your grocery receipts in reverse chronological order; a painting of a clock; or zodiac signs as yearbook superlatives!

You can submit pieces to themelangebyartsci@outlook.com, formatted as a Microsoft Word Doc with editing access enabled for McMaster email addresses. Truly anything goes, as long as it's under 1000 words and written from a place of kindness! Feel free to email themelangebyartsci@outlook.com with any questions, or for inspiration/feedback on ideas. To get a better sense of what the magazine is all about, you can also consult past issues here: <https://issuu.com/artscimelange>. If you submit your writing, you can expect to spend some time working with an editor to refine it before publication.

The Melange is a space for all Artsci students to use their voice, share their work, and highlight our wide range of experiences and interests. We encourage everyone to submit their work regardless of experience with artwork or writing.

HEY YOU,
YEAH YOU,
YOU GOT
THIS!

