

Vision Journal

IV

# CAPSULE

Reminisce about the past visions of the future perceived,  
thinking to ourselves,

A journal made by students, for students.



ICDIT COUNCIL

## What Does it Mean to Us



Through the ages, man has perceived the future as seen from the past and the past as seen from the future.

Retrofuturism becomes alive through these thoughts, both in nature and man-made, and have trespassed the dimensions of time. A time capsule of sorts preserves them as the years go by, time dwindling away as we leave the era of retro and spearhead into a future filled with automation, momentum, and cyberpunk, venturing into the brave new world. Alas, we reminisce about the vintage and the past, thinking to ourselves where did the time go, and how are past-visions of the future perceived?

The background is a vibrant pink with a marbled, organic pattern. A thick black oval border frames the central text.

**What Does it  
Mean to You?**



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# **Justine Wang**

## **Co-Editor in Chief**

Hi everyone! My name is Justine and I am a 4th year student in the Digital Enterprise Management (DEM) specialist program. I am one of the Editors in Chief for this year's journal, Capsule. I joined Vision because I believe it is important for students to have a creative platform that fosters collaboration and expression of ideas. Each piece will preserve a moment in time, and even the journal itself will become a time-capsule for the future to look back on.



# Meet the Team



## **Faiza Haque** **Co-Editor in Chief & Graphics Lead**

Hey everyone! My name is Faiza Haque, and I am a fourth year, double majoring in CCIT and Political Science. Last year I got to experience Vision as one of their Photography Leads, this year I am honoured to be the Co-Editor in Chief alongside Justine. Vision helps bring out the creative forces within not only ICCIT Council, but all of UTM students. Vision is important to me as it inspires and showcases an outlet to be creative. This year's theme falls under encapsulating the past, present and future, and to me that reflects on how I view myself now, to my past and what I can give for the future, creatively.

# Schuyler Keno

## Graphics Lead

Schuyler Keno is a second-year Digital Enterprise Management Specialist (DEM) student in the ICCIT Department. As one of the editors at Vision Journal, I'm looking forward to helping create a space where students can publish their creative work! This year's edition of the Vision Journal, Capsule, is all about understanding art as representative of moments in time. Our environment and the pressures of our times support and inform our creativity. Every artist's unique lens impacts the conversations we have today and will inform those of the future.



# Shashoti Haque

## Photography Lead

Hello! I'm Shashoti, a third year student pursuing a specialist in DEM. I am the Photography lead for vision this year. I joined vision because I enjoy playing around with various creative mediums in my spare time. Creative expression is very important to me. Working with other individuals in such an environment is very engaging and rewarding. Capsule to me is the idea of collecting past, present and future. Storing them in a memory box, or perhaps pasting the material on a vision board, journal or diary. This theme builds on the themes from our previous years and I believe it falls perfectly in line.



# Clarisse Wong

## Marketing Lead

Hello! My name is Clarisse and I am currently a 4th year student pursuing a specialist in Digital Enterprise Management (DEM). This year, I am the acting Marketing Lead. Personally, I joined Vision this year because I love the idea of showcasing students' works and allowing them to freely express their emotions through art. To me, the theme 'Capsule' is when we preserve memories and experiences from the past that have helped us grow into the person we are today. When we look back at these moments, we then get to reminisce on the path it took us to get here and be proud of ourselves for achieving such great heights.



# Disha Prabhu

## Writing Lead



Hey folks! My name is Disha, and I am a 3rd year student studying CCIT and PWC. For this year's Vision Journal, I am the Journalist Lead, due to my experience with creative writing and publishing journals. I joined Vision this year to express my creativity and collaborate with fellow creatives, something that personally drives me as a creative! This year's theme is Capsule, which relates to the collection and preservation of societal artifacts and culture. We use these time capsules not only to reminisce about the past, but to communicate to the future about what life was like many years ago.

# Rio McKen

## Writing Lead



Hello there, my name is Rio and I am a student in the University of Toronto pursuing a specialist degree in Digital Enterprise Management. My role in vision is one of the Writing Leads. I am in vision because this journal allows me to give myself and other students a platform to tell their stories while simultaneously leaving room for reflection and growth. The things that drive my creativity is my boundless curiosity towards the world and its vast mysteries. Capsule to me refers to a moment in time, a time capsule so to speak. Moreover, I believe that the time already moves so fast and the trick to time is slowing it down to a specific moment where we can preserve these memories and the feelings that come with those memories.

## **Editor**

Diala Abu Baker  
Mariela Sol Torroba  
Hennigen



# *Writing Team*

## **Writers**

Guanghan (Lily) Yu  
Vanessa Hy  
Lina Tupak-Karim



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## **Illustrators**

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Valentina Guzman-Martinez

Michelle Tang



## **Graphic Designers**

Faiza Haque

Schuyler Keno

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## **Photography Team**

### **Photographers**

Sirine Messaïkeh

Jodhbir Mehmi



# Golden World

Story by:  
Lily Yu

Edited by:  
Diala Abu Baker

Illustrated by:  
Valentina Guzman-Martinez

Jared lifted his eyes from the E-Drive folders on his desk and squinted at the dial hanging beside the window: 4 minutes until lunch break. He leaned back and allowed himself the last few minutes of his morning to glance down at all the Colours pouring out the buildings below.

The Reds were always the first ones out, leading the crowd with crisp blazers and briefcases; a few Violets were stationed around intersections and rushed left and right. Other Colours trickled out from ash-toned buildings and sprinkled themselves evenly across the multi-layered walkways surrounding the Istria Habitat. A monotoned parade spanned all the way to the artificial horizon. No one looked up from the concrete and milled about all day under a golden ring of light.

Sounds of the lunch bell clamored throughout the fifth floor of Vista, followed by a murmur of shuffling movements. Jared exhaled the office's stagnant air and stood up from his chair, the high-tech polymer remembering his imprint for only a second. A blond head popped up from the cubicle on his left and raised his arms up for a stretch.

"Going out to eat?" Asked Harvey, arms leaning on the plastic dividers.

"Just getting some coffee." Jared swung his jacket to his shoulders.

"Mind if I come with?"

"You are paying for me then." Said Jared.

"Deal." Harvey beamed.

They walked to the elevator together. In all of Istria Habitat, barely anyone can imagine a cafe tucked away behind the intersection

of 3rd and 11th street. While the Hot Rock Cafe wasn't as large or extravagant as many others are on the outside, it hid its charm in the interior. In the deepest corner from the door, a brick fireplace burned an endless supply of cedarwood. The timber's minty warmth had soaked into the furniture overtime and sweetened the cracking leather. Framed posters of renowned Yellow singers hung alongside well-polished instruments and coffee-stained sheet music. Soft jazz music

drifted out from somewhere within the floral printed walls and lush maroon carpets. The Hot Rock Cafe was Jared's escape. There were no crowds, no work, and no burdens inside those two mahogany doors. Today, the cafe was empty of guests save for the Navy Blue coming in through the front door and his slacked-jawed Cyan coworker.

"How did you manage to find this place?" Harvey's head swiveled. "And where did they manage to get all this stuff? Just look at those





guitars!”

Jared shrugged.

“A Red might be sponsoring it. Could be the rich’s weekly fling.”

“Doesn’t sound like any Red I know.” Harvey breathed out slowly.

“Do you know any Reds?”

“No, which proves my point. They don’t have time for the things we like.”

Behind the coffee makers, lunch options were catalogued in cursive chalk on dusty blackboards. After ordering their meals and coffees from a Salmon Orange at the till, Jared and Harvey settled down by a bistro table next to the fireplace.

“So,” Harvey began. “4 whole years at Vista.”

Jared hummed, liking how the leather chairs warmed from the fire.

“It’s been a while.”

“Right?” Harvey chuckled.

“When you first came all the Cyans were betting on how long it’d take

you to resign. I lost my 20 after 2 months.”

“People exaggerate.”

“Not when they know exactly how hard it is to keep up the standard around here. Working with all those rigid rules and carbon copies all day?” Harvey whistled. “Even for acold Colour, that’s pushing their limit.”

A Peach Pink waitress brought them their drinks on a heated tray; The coffee always came fast. Jared nestled his cup between his palms and felt the wonderous aroma of fresh coffee trickling into his nostrils, through his body, and rejuvenating every muscle.

“Come to think about it, I never asked you why you took this job.” Harvey sipped his caramel latte from the armchair across the table. “A Navy Blue, so young no less. You would’ve been needed in all sorts of places, like Labs or even Recruitment.



I know I'm not the only one that thinks you are wasting yourself here, so what's so homey about our little slice of hell?"

"Vista is an elite Blue institution, a distinguished company, their achievements to mankind are incomprehensible..."

"Stop. Don't give me that corporate cookie-cutter bullshit. I'm asking you, Jared, the dude in front of me having an orgasm over his espresso. Do you like working at Vista?"

"I've been good at it," Jared replied, unsettled at the mental image.

"But do you like it?" Harvey pressed. "Working with numbers in those little cubicles? Never seeing what the world has to offer?"

"Get on with the point, what are you trying to say?" Jared narrowed his eyes.

The tap-tapping of loafers on

wood echoed behind them. It was the Peach waitress, coming back with their sandwiches and soups in bone china dishes. As she set their plates down, Harvey complimented her cotton candy coloured hair. The waitress seemed happier afterwards. She turned to walk back to the counters and Harvey's smile faltered. His eyes stared through her, as if he was seeing someone else walking in the same rhythmic steps.

"Do you remember going through the Processor?" Harvey whispered, the left side of his face flashing from the flicking fire. "I never knew a white room could be so loud, couldn't even tell where the simulation ended and my thoughts began. It was like I was falling somewhere no one can reach. When I came out... Well, those Violets could tell something wasn't right with me, but it was a bad year for Cyans and I guess they needed to meet quotas,

so they let me onboard anyways.”

Jared was silent.

“What would you wish for?” Harvey’s blue-green eyes focused back on his friend. “If you could start everything back over, back when the System wasn’t even half a thought in some old guy’s head. Could you imagine what the world would be like? If we didn’t have to live as Numbers and Colours, but as Humans?”

“That’s not for us to decide,” Jared said. “The best of Mankind left for the future, the ones that were merciful stayed, founded the System to keep us safe.”

“Safe?” Harvey’s cold eyes burned. “They went all the way up to the stars, found eternal happiness, and didn’t spare us a crumb.”

“The Golden ones planned everything out, we just need to follow.” Jared’s muscles pulled stiff against his jaw. “Nothing good comes from being different, you’ll just get weeded out.”

Harvey bit the inside of his cheek and was quiet. The fire crackled, their soups were cooling at the corner of the table. With an air of finality, Harvey reached into his jacket pocket and slid something across the table, a folded post-it note. There was a drawing of a mushroom on it. The backdrop was speckled with green and yellow dots. Bold colours blended harmoniously between tiny strokes of pencil crayon,

resulting in a pleasing shade of rainbow. The little rainbow mushroom was smiling.

“My little sister gave it to me the day before my Processing,” said Harvey. “She loves mushrooms, thinks they’re good luck. Snuck some real ones on me too, but the Violets found those.”

*He brought that from the Hub.* Jared stared at the innocent drawing. *That will get him neutralized.*

“You must miss her.” He said instead, mouth dry.

“You have no idea.” Harvey’s lips curled up slightly, and then said, “If everything works out tomorrow though, I won’t have to anymore.”

Jared froze, disoriented as though he had just been struck by lightning.

“Don’t.”

“Isn’t it exciting?” Harvey blinked up at Jared, breathless. “I’ve got it all figured out. When the Violets go to the Hub for the Processing in the afternoon, I’ll sneak into the cargo bay. They need more Yellows and Greens this year, so they’ll be going to my town first...”

“No, stop.” Jared stood up. He didn’t know why he had to stand up, didn’t know what he was going to do with his hands now that he’s stood up.

“They will catch you and you’ll die. I can’t let you do that.”



"I've been here for 20 years, Jared. Not once have I done anything for myself. Now I have a chance, a good chance, to go back and be who I want to be." Harvey folded the paper back into a tiny square. "I didn't plan to tell you; I know how sensitive you are to these things. But, well, if I am leaving for a better future, I might as well give my best friend that option too." Sensing Jared's conflict, Harvey grinned and held out a warm, steady hand.

"So, what do you say? Want to come?"

Before Jared could reply, the doors to the Cafe burst open and rebounded violently against its frame. Two Black Stripes marched into the restaurant and, upon seeing the two

men by the fireplace, flashed their rank.

"Cyan 4194. We have received reports of nonconformity. Do not resist and come willingly; it'll make things easier for us."

Suddenly, Harvey jumped from his arm chair and lunged across the table at Jared. Bowls and plates went careening off the edge, spilling their contents across the carpet. Harvey's face was as pale as snow.

"You betrayed me!" He roared as loud as his quaking voice could manage. "I thought of you as a brother, and you sold me out!" Jared froze as Harvey clawed desperately at his chest. As the Stripes rushed into the cafe, Jared could feel a small square shoved into his inner shirt

pocket.

One hit with the baton sent Harvey collapsing onto the floor, eyes wide and mumbling nonsense. The taller of the two Stripes restrained him with electric tethers and hoisted him out of the cafe. The other one, a prudish man with broad shoulders, wasn't in such a hurry and instead walked up to Jared.

The man saluted.

"Nice to see you again Sergeant."

"2112," Jared acknowledged him faintly.

"Damned Tints." The Stripe spat out the word like it poisoned him.

"Making us work during lunch break, nothing but trouble... Good thing you caught him, sir! As expected from our star agent!" The striped officer laughed heartily and punched the Navy Blue lightly on the shoulder.

Jared staggered.

"Geez, did that rogue Tint hurt you somewhere sir? Want me to call Support?"

"No, no, I'm fine—just startled."

Jared breathed in, then out. "Go back to the station. I'll be there to report in a minute."

A few steps and the open-shut click of the mahogany door, and the Hot Rock was peaceful again. The fireplace casted shadows over the upturned soup bowls, the jazz music played on gracefully. Harvey's post-it note burned against Jared's heart. Collapsing back to his couch, Jared buried his head in his hands. Who, who could've...?

A tap on Jared's shoulder jolted him. Looking up, he could see his pallid face reflected in mirthful Pink eyes.

"Your total is \$40.45, sir."



# Valentina Guzman-Martinez

I'm a second year Art and Art History and CCIT student interested in graphic design. My works were created for university design classes, but I usually get carried away and get caught up in the joy that is using illustrator. I've realised that being introduced to digital mediums for creating art has made me lose my love for traditional mediums like painting and drawing. I always seem to go be attracted to older media forms. In my opinion, vintage shoes are always in style, and nothing sounds better than an old vinyl record. I guess technologies and mediums all have their own strengths and weaknesses (illustrator definitely has a few..) but they're all valid!! Maybe I'll go paint a robot for a change...




# en in Blue

Lina  
Tupak-Karim  
Story by

I grow my plants indoors, because I live in the future, and my grow lights shine an artificial, hazy blue. At night I sit in the blue light, and when I look at myself in my mirror, my skin is blue, too, and my eyes black. I look like an alien. When I take off my grow lights, I turn on my television. Everything I own is up-to-date, from my cellphone to my laptop. My television is the only thing vintage. It's one of those televisions from the seventies; cube-shaped and heavy with an antenna sticking out. My television only has one channel, and it plays reruns of cartoons from the late nineties and early 2000s.

Back in the early 2000s I had a little radio. It was black and red and played all the stations in the city. I'd spend my nights listening to generic pop, and when I got bored of that, I'd switch the channel to go back in time. I lay back in my bed and focus on my show, a series about a girl in high school, a real nerd. She's a bit of an outcast, and she reads books. I once used to think books were useful. That was before I realized everything has already been said, and that even if it hasn't, there was no need to know much anymore, anyways.



“Hey,” the cartoon girl says with a frown. She speaks with a deadpan voice, her tone dripping with cynicism as aggressively as the way milk dripped from my lips when I ate cereal in front of the television as a child. She’s looking directly at me. “Maybe you’d be less miserable if you cracked one of these open every now and again.” I blink, but she’s gone back to eating a pie with her artist friend. I miss my friends. I should talk to them tomorrow when I wake.

The next cartoon follows a little boy and his magical godparents. The little brat is so lucky; he makes a wish and it comes true.

“You click a button,” he says in that high-pitched, nasally cartoon kid voice, “and your wishes come true!”

I guess he’s right. Back when I was a child I had to wait for things. I had to wait for mom to go to the store to buy the ingredients for a cake, and then I had to wait for her to bake it. I had to wait for my school friends to be dropped off at my house to see them. And I had to wait until I found someone desirable enough to want to fuck. Now, I navigate the web for



a little and I can get mostly anything: food at my doorstep, friends in my inbox, sex on video. All my basic needs, taken care of. I really am lucky!

I shut off my television after the episode ends and fall into a light sleep. Fragments of dreams come back to me when I wake. I recall smashing my television, glass shards littered on the floor and reflecting episodes streaming from somewhere despite the brokenness. I recall playing on the swings with my childhood best friend in the park by our



**Jodhbir Mehmi**  
Photographed by

houses. I recall a gentle touch, someone caressing my cheek and planting a delicate kiss on my forehead.

When I wake, I turn on my blue grow lights before I go out for the day. I take my Cipralex, and I talk to my friends, the little avatars on my phone. I wonder what they look like. I wonder what they do. I wonder if they'd recognize me if they crossed me on the street. It's so bright outside, I squint in pain before I put on my sunglasses. I can't wait to get home from work tonight so I can get back to my cartoons.

# Capsule Excerpts

**"I can't explain the relationship between time and memories because two hours ago I was having dinner but everyone thought the world was ending in 2012 six months ago and the best summer I had when I was six happened yesterday"**

**Vanessa**

**"What do you mean Mean Girls was released almost twenty years ago?"**

**Mariela**

**"Failing to manage your time is really just, "Oh, I've spent three hours doing nothing," "I spent an hour just watching YouTube," "Making and eating dinner took an hour and a half." Like I barely remember what I had for lunch two days ago?? How am I supposed to remember that all this really did happen here???"**

**Vanessa**

**"We're almost half way through the 2020s and I still haven't processed 2019"**

**Mariela**


**"For children, childhood is timeless. It is always the present. Everything is in the present tense. Of course, they have memories. Of course, time shifts a little for them and Christmas comes round in the end. But they don't feel it. Today is what they feel, and when they say 'When I grow up,' there is always an edge of disbelief--how could they ever be other than what they are?"**

**Ian McEwan, *The Child in Time***

# Have It All



**Illustration By: Anaiah Reyes**



I found one of my older unfinished pieces to have strong visual imagery relating to the ICCIT journal's theme. I initially formulated the concept of this piece with the idea of bringing to light the difficulties surrounding the modernization of our current cities and the food crisis as a "hard pill to swallow".

The top portion of the pill represents the vibrant image of abundance and prosperity, and the ultimate façade of a developing society. The underlying smog-filled city is indicative of the ugly side of urbanization, the pollution that threatens the life we've been accustomed to.



**Youth**

**Photographed By: Sirine Messaikeh**



# Isolation

Photographed By: Sirine Messaikeh

At the start of quarantine in 2020, my high school hosted a photography competition themed on the pandemic, and this prompted me to take picture 1 [the one with the newspapers in the background]. I wanted to capture the day-to-day anxieties most of us were experiencing reading the headlines and living in such unprecedented isolation. Through this experience, I discovered a passion for photography and continued to take pictures of my younger sister. Looking back, I see these as a capsule of quarantine. Despite the stress, it also gave me more time to develop and practise this new hobby, and it was a way to bond with my little sister as she was an enthusiastic model, and we explored the nature around us to find places to take pictures in. I took the two pictures that feature both her and her friend after the pandemic eased up a little, and those remind me of the moments of being reunited with friends and that ultimately, although the pandemic changed a lot of things, the value and joy that friends and family bring will never change. So we shouldn't forget to capture the little moments with them because those make meaningful capsules.

# **A Trail of Memories**

**Story By: Vanessa Hy  
Edited By: Mariela Sol Torroba  
Hennigen  
Illustrated By: Michelle Tang**

"Nobody goes here anymore," Risa hisses, her words loud in the silence between us.

I twist around from where I was reading book spines, giving my friend a look. Ten years of friendship since kindergarten, and Risa still complains whenever I go to the library. I point at her.

"You," I jab my thumb back at myself, "me. We're here. And so is everyone else we walked by to get here."

Risa glides her fingers across one of the metal shelves.

"You wanted to be here, so I'm here, and everyone else, I don't know, isn't where we are." She pulls out a random book. "What even is this? Something about vintage cars?"

"I hope you know where you took that out from," I say. Risa rolls her eyes and thumbs through the

pages of the book. "And yeah, we're in the section where the vintage car books are."

"You already know a lot about that. If you want to know more, why don't we go to my place? You can search up some pictures while we're here too—the library isn't just for books, you know."

I stare at the shelf and slide a book out. "Yeah, but that's how I know libraries. For books. I'm just looking, anyway."

"Just looking, sure," Risa mutters, tapping the heel of her running shoe against the floor. "It'd be so much better if you just come over. My Grandpa can tell you all you want."

I pause. "He's at your house?"

"Yeah, surprise!" Risa snaps the book shut and pushes it back onto the shelf. I take a step to look at it, and she shoves me back lightly. "Relax, I put it back in the right place."

"Okay, fine, sure." I glance down at the book in my hands and open it. "We can go later." "He might be asleep later. Just check out some books and go." I don't move.

Around me, I hear murmurs and chatters of children and teens our age, playing or hanging out with their friends. Listening to them makes it hard to remember the times I visited the library with Mom, holding her hand as we journeyed from shelf to shelf. But that's how things are with memories.



Beside me, Risa sighs. "You've already been spending so much of the summer at the library, Alex. But the library's always going to be here. Come back later."

"You don't have to stay," I reply. "I'll see you tomorrow."

"Alex," Risa says, but I keep my eyes glued to the book and shake my head.

I sit crossed-legged on the floor, flipping through the pages slowly as I listen to Risa go. When I was younger, I used to point at each vintage car photo in the books we had, waiting for Mom to respond.

I mouth car names—Toyota 2000GT, Lotus Elan, Cadillac Eldorado—trying to imagine her saying them with me.

When I reach an unfamiliar photo of one, I stop.

Did Mom know this car? Would she have told me if she had the time? The questions bubble in my chest, filling its cavity with futile wishes. If she was here, she'd be prancing at the mention of my sixteenth birthday, crowing at how she'll teach me to drive.

Dad and I would laugh, and we wouldn't be having dinner conversations tiptoeing around the sinkhole her death left behind.

Someone's shoe lightly nudges at my knee. "Sorry," I mutter, placing the book on my lap.

"Good to see you too, Alex," the person chuckles, and I whip my head up to see Risa's grandpa watching me from her phone.

Risa flashes a winning smile at me. "Alex missed you, Grandpa."

I snatch the phone from her, my breath ballooning in my chest. "Hey, Mitch."

Mitch has a fond smile on his face, and I don't hesitate to return it. He's been living back in the house where Risa's dad grew up in since Risa's grandma passed. Mitch says it makes him feel closer to her.

But with Mitch's house being too far to walk to, I've missed him, his absence sharp whenever I hang out at Risa's place.

"Why don't you come on over? I've missed you too, you know," Mitch says.

Risa settles down beside me, and I angle the phone until she's out of the camera's view.

"Yeah, I was just going to go," I say. Risa gently shoves me over to shake her head at Mitch.

I scowl, pushing Risa back enough until we're both in the frame. "Ignore her. I was just looking at some books first."

Mitch's eyes gleam with amusement. "Then come and visit! I wouldn't have taken this call if I knew you wouldn't have a good time."

Taken? I squint at Risa. She shrugs, a small, pleased smile on her lips.

"I know you're right," I say, turning my head back to the phone. So what if Risa called Mitch to get me out of the library? I was going to visit him eventually.

"Don't fall asleep before we get back." We wave at him as I end the call.

Risa takes her phone and slides it into her pocket. She grins at me.

"Race you there?" I sigh. "Let me guess—winner gets bragging rights?"

Risa's grin widens.

It's a twenty-minute race to Risa's house. Predictably, when we arrive, I end up lugging past framed photos of Risa and Mitch grinning at her cross-country meets. Risa bounces ahead of me, greeting Mitch in the living room. As per tradition, Mitch and I watch Risa celebrate her victory. I accept the bottle of water he offers me, slumping onto the couch.

"I think he gets it," I interrupt, finally catching my breath before Risa can mimic my tired stop to the front porch for the third time. Risa opens her mouth, but Mitch lays a hand on her shoulder.

"Now that Alex can breathe, let's catch up," Mitch says. "What have I missed?" "Actually, I want to ask you something," I say, twisting the bottle cap back and forth. At his encouraging smile, I bite off my fears.

"Do you remember the first car you bought?" "The first car I bought," Mitch muses, the armchair groaning as he leans forward. "If you're looking for a name, I'm afraid I can't give you one."

"No, that's okay. I just wanted to know if you remembered. Or if you had any memories you could tell me." I wince at my words mashing into each other, too quick and too uncertain. He mulls over it for a moment.

"I'm sure you know more about it than me, but when I was in high school, cars were something everyone was interested in. They aren't as pretty or safe as they are now, but they were just starting to establish what car safety was."

Was that all he had to say about his first car? I screw the bottle cap back onto its neck. "Did you have to buy your own car? What did you think of all the newer cars? And how did you feel about, just, all the safety stuff coming in?"

"Why are you suddenly so curious?" Risa asks. "Is this for an assignment? School doesn't start for another month."

I glower at her, but Mitch smiles at me. "Well, it is a fair question. Why are you asking, Alex?"

I glance down. My bottle of water is already half-empty. "Don't you think that the 60s or the 70s or when you were younger, that everything was simpler? Did you believe in what they said about the future? Weren't you scared to try all the new technologies, like the Internet or the computer?"

Risa squints at me, and I shrug at her.

With Mitch being the peacemaker between us for the past decade, he's ensured that Risa won't sit me down to interrogate my feelings when I slip into my quieter, contemplative moods.

A glazed look comes over Mitch's eyes. I've only seen that face when he thinks about Risa's grandma.

"Did I show you two my land phone and Walkman?" Mitch asks, and Risa and I nod.

"They were nice, but they aren't as convenient as the phones now."

"But you weren't scared?" I ask.

Mitch drums his fingers on the armrest. "Maybe I was," he admits. "But eventually people saw how much easier it was to use them. Everything coming later in the future was for the better."

I stare into his eyes, and with him, I know I can say it. "Have you ever thought that maybe we don't deserve all the technologies we have now? The phones and all the AI—don't you think we aren't ready?"

"That's a big question." Mitch settles back in his chair, and Risa makes room for him from where she silently leans on its arm. "Technology is all about computers and AI now, but it used to be as simple as an invention like Goldfish crackers."

Lifting my hand off my bottle of water, I raise my hand to interject, but Mitch shakes his head gently at me.

"Hear me out, Alex. Whenever you trace technology's history, the past and future blur. The past becomes short, and the dreams you have now for the future become distant. But as simple as the past seems, it's no way to live."

"What does this have to do with you mentioning Goldfish crackers?" Risa pipes up, voicing my unspoken question, and my back straightens as I look at him.

"Do you know why Goldfish crackers were created?" Mitch asks.

"Because someone really liked fish?" I guess. "Close. The astrological sign—" zodiac sign, Risa mouths to me, as if I needed clarification, "—of the creator's wife was Pisces, so he made them for her."

Risa and I exchange glances, both of our brows furrowed. Where was he going with this?

"He made it out of love, like a lot of things are." Mitch explains, a fond smile tugging at his lips. "Love, curiosity, wanting to make the world a better place—so much of what we have now is to make life easier. It's a human thing."



"Okay," says Risa. "But Alex has a point. What about the atomic bombs and things like that? Not everything is made like Goldfish crackers."

"That's true," Mitch agrees, "but isn't that life?"  
We groan at his answer.

"Am I wrong? Sometimes the fears people have seem distant, even when they could come true. They're like dreams. But what we remember most in our life isn't what we fear, but what we love. I know you two don't remember my late wife Rose, but when you look back to when you were children, what do you remember most?"

I close my eyes, and instantly, Mom is with me.

She's sitting me on her lap while we look at photos of vintage cars in books, holding my hand and smiling at me. Until she had got into her car that day. Everything she loved and left behind—the books and photos of vintage cars and what they'd become—did she pass them all to me?

"The people and the things we love live on through us," Mitch says, the corner of his eyes crinkling. "I mean, Risa has Rose's eyes and nose."

Risa scrunches up her nose and pokes her tongue out at him. Mitch brings up the similarities every time he sees her, but a smile blooms on Risa's face soon after. "Did I almost get her name too?" she asks.

We laugh, and as Risa and Mitch launch into another conversation, I smile to myself.



***Memories***

**Photographed By: Sirine Messaikeh**



When I think of a capsule I think of memories and moments that we want to hold on to while we are in a new advanced world. Taking pictures is one of the ways in which we encapsulate our lives, and we always look back at them with fondness and nostalgia. I first discovered my love for photography by taking pictures of my little sister, who was always an enthusiastic model on those long lockdown days. I enjoy taking direct portraits, and in this shoot I bonded with my sister over doing her makeup and prompting her various poses. It was also interesting to experiment changing the background to give the photos a more futuristic feel.

Overall, to me these photographs are a capsule of time spent with my sister, and a reminder that a simple portrait can hold so much meaning. Even though our world might keep getting more futuristic, the simple joy of being around friends and family is truly timeless :)



# *Birth*day Present

By: Michelle Tang

In the little country Taiwan, in my grandmother's little home, in a little side bedroom stood this gorgeous vintage Singer sewing machine. I loved playing with the pedals, turning the wheels, sewing imaginary clothes on it. Grandmother promised me that when I turned twenty, she would surely buy me my own sewing machine.

And every year, she would remind me playfully, that my twentieth was coming up.

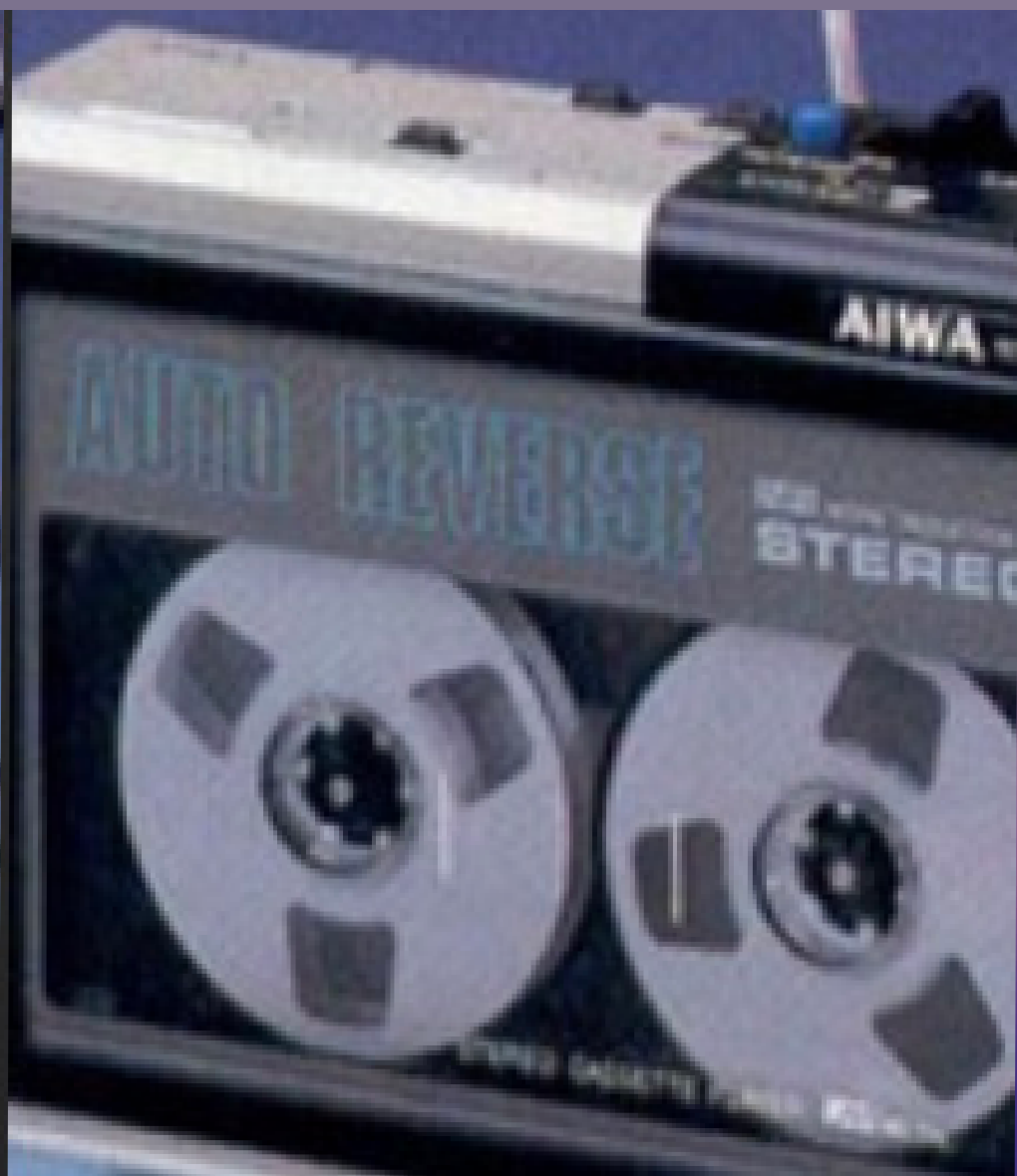
However, a week before that fateful day, I was caught up in all the university searches, the essay writings, the test takings. I told my grandmother, "Don't buy one for me, I don't have the time to learn a new hobby."

And so, she didn't. I was glad because it wouldn't have gotten the attention it deserved. But now, I sometimes imagine that the Singer Sewing machine is still sitting in the little side bedroom, in her little home, waiting for me to go visit.

# ULE CAPS

# ULE CAPS

Travel through time



IEEIT COUNCIL

# CAPSU

Travel through time with tunes



# Retro

by Jodhbir Mehmi



# Artist Statement

## Jodhbir Mehmi

**As an artist, I am constantly inspired by the ever-evolving concept of time. In my latest series, I depict a girl from the future gazing out of a window, lost in thought as she reflects on the past.**

**The girl in my piece represents the human experience, constantly looking back on the past while facing the unknown future. The window she looks out of serves as a metaphor for the passage of time and the ever-changing perspectives it brings. The girl's facial expression is nostalgia and longing as she reflects on the memories and experiences that have shaped her.**

**My intention with this series is to capture the human experience of reflection and nostalgia and to remind viewers that while the future may be unknown, it is shaped by our past experiences. The girl in my piece reminds me that it is essential to take a moment to reflect on the past and the memories that have shaped us before moving forward into the future.**

**In a world constantly moving forward, my piece reminds me to stop and take a moment to reflect on the past and the memories that have shaped us. My work will inspire others to do the same and remember that the past is always a part of us, shaping how we see and interact with the world around us.**

**Love in the Age of Simulacra**  
a Flash Fiction story  
by Lina Tupak-Karim

**Artwork by Anaiah Reyes**



*Anaiah Reyes*

I sift through the stack of polaroid pictures on Jaziel's desk. He's captured hundreds of moments and immortalized dozens of people with the pictures. There's images of skaters mid-trick, images of rare vintage cars being shown off at exclusive car shows, friends smoking in dimly lit basements. Jaziel knows a cool trick, double exposure, where he can capture two pictures on one film, so there's a background image and a layered one. It makes people look like ghosts.

My mother's got polaroid pictures, too, boxes of them. My favourite is a photo of my grandmother sitting on an outdoor patio in Ibiza.

Jaziel is the only person my age I know who takes polaroid pictures with a proper polaroid camera. Everyone else uses a cellphone. There's one photo of a girl and a guy outside of a gas station convenience store at night. They're sprawled on the pavement, red lighting from the signs shining on their faces.

The girl's name is Lucia, and she died of a fentanyl overdose earlier this year. Lucia wanted to become a different person. It sounds cliché, but she got surgery after surgery in vain attempts at immortalizing her youth. She was only a few years older than me in her mid-twenties. The guy in the photo is Mateo. He was dating Lucia. Mateo had a strange obsession with robots. He read about them for the first time when he was a child in some Nat Geo kids' magazine and has been consumed since. Mateo was the kind of guy who played video games all day. He lived in the digital realm, in neon lights and hyperpop music videos. He actually suggested Lucia's first surgery, a non-invasive lip filler. He was inspired by some hyper realistic robot that broke the internet.

It always disturbed me that Mateo wanted Lucia to resemble that robot, even remotely. It isn't natural.

"I love you," he told her after her thousandth surgery. Jaziel and I were there, and I wanted to shout "you don't love her, you love the image she projects, and that's not love, that's an image of it."

In middle school they were best friends, and we always thought they'd get married. We had imagined them growing old together, venturing into the future with the same lively spirits they had back then. We never predicted that Mateo would discover a new world so removed from the one the rest of us occupied, or that Lucia would try to morph to find a place in that world. Mateo wanted a cyber princess, but Lucia was just a girl.

# **SPECIAL THANKS**

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