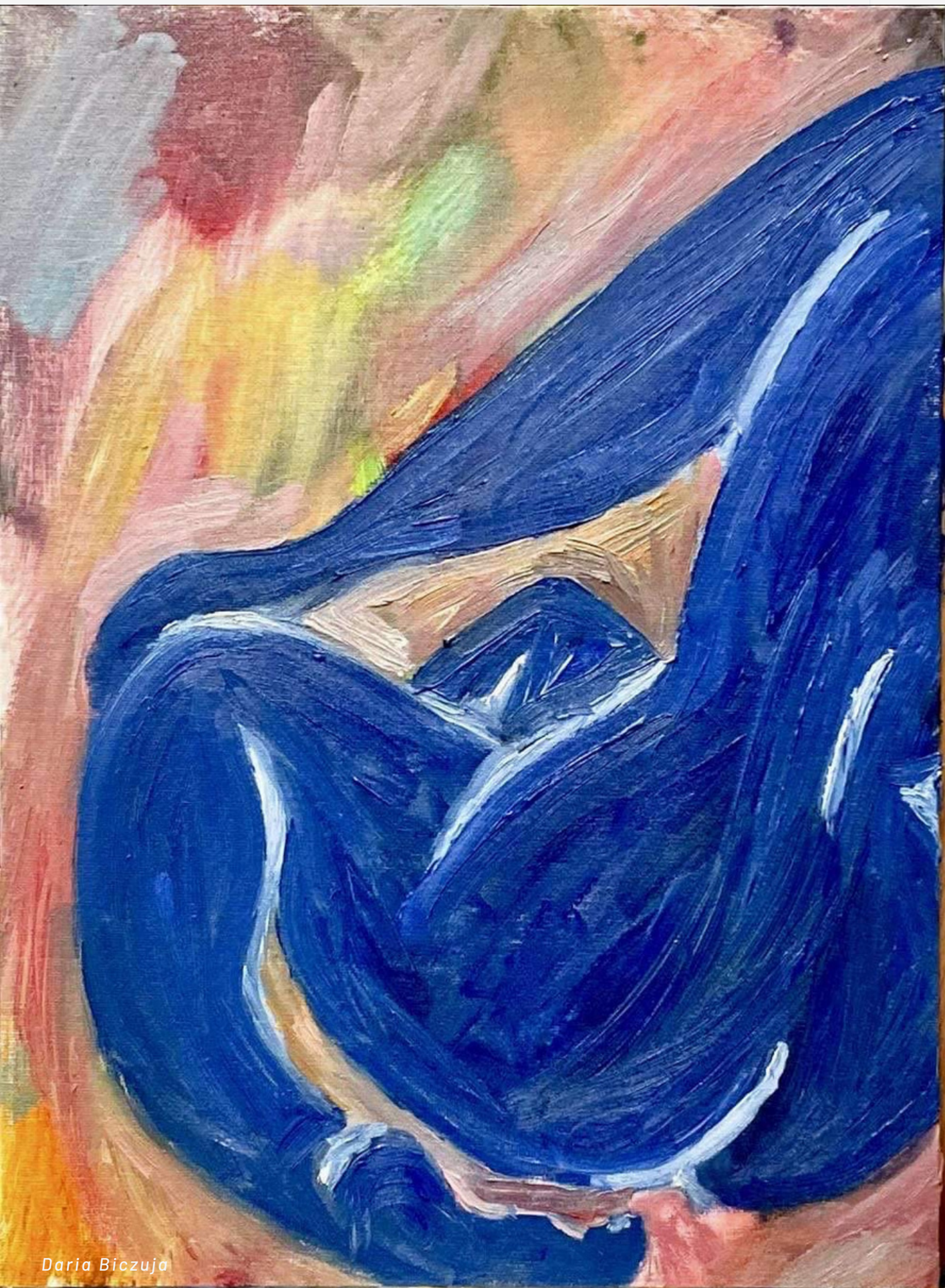


work of art magazine

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**WORK  
OF  
ART**



Daria Biczuja

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## THE ART OF CHANGING COLORS

From the house of Anrealage, the Japanese designer Kunihiro Morinaga unveiled the power of combining fashion and technology with light-sensitive garments at the Fall-Winter 23/24 Paris Fashion Week held at the Théâtre de la Madeleine.

A fashion week is a fashion industry event, where fashion designers, brands or "houses" display their latest collections. Its purpose is to exhibit them to potential buyers and the media. These events influence the upcoming fashion trends for the current and approaching seasons.

The first fashion week was hosted in Paris. Since its debut in 1973, it has become an unmissable event among designers and celebrities. There are four major fashion weeks in the opulent world of clothing design: New York, Paris, London and Milan. The cities, commonly referred to as the "Big 4", are the definition of grandeur and extravagance.

The events at Paris Fashion Week are divided into three categories: menswear, haute couture and ready-to-wear. From the three, haute couture has its own requirements – in order to qualify for this category, a given fashion house must meet certain conditions set by the Chamber of the Haute Couture. According to these rules, a house must present a collection of at least 35 pieces (including both daytime and evening-wear) per season, only then are they eligible to take part in the runway. Few houses are chosen for this particular category every season and thus, can officially produce haute couture collections. This year the attention of the viewers was occupied by color-changing garments.

Pairs of models came out on stage wearing similar but not identical garments that were often cut symmetrically to look the same from the front as behind. Switching up the traditional fashion runway format, they stood next to each other on stage. Two UV-emitting bars were then lowered in front of the models. As the light passed in front of the garments, their colors changed from white into vivid tones and patterns, including the Anrealage monogram and polka dots. Instead of walking towards the end of the stage to showcase the back of the garment, the models simply turned around and the UV-emitting bars were lowered once again to reveal the design. According to the designer, Morinaga, the clothes also react to the UV in sunlight, and its response is specific to the particular weather conditions.



Ten years ago, Kunihiro Morinaga used fabric with photochromic properties for the first time. Since then, he has frequently utilized this technology in his designs. Morinaga claimed that this was his first time incorporating the technology into such a huge variety of materials (such as faux fur, velvet, lace, and more), and added that he had never been able to create shifting shades of colors.

There was a deeper environmental point waiting to be exposed by this line of consideration. The inspiration behind the show derives from the theory of Umwelt. A German word meaning 'environment' or 'surround-world', which is a 19th-century concept developed by the German philosopher and biologist Jakob Johann Baron von Uexküll that explores how living beings perceive their environment. Umwelt denotes the idea that an organism's perception of the environment is defined by their ability to perceive. The show metaphorically reflects a wider concept as it demonstrates how things are not always what they appear to be and how perspectives could change if put under a different light, in the same manner that the garments transform under UV-light.

There are variations in how different organisms use sensory information to view the world. For instance, seeing the world via an insect's eyes serves as a reminder that not everything is the same for everyone. A yellow flower and the Umwelt for bees that can see in the ultraviolet spectrum, are very different from what a human would consider that flower to be. The areas of nectar, which is a vibrant reddish-purple for the bee, is monochromatic in contrast to the rest of the bloom.

For Kunihiro Morinaga, opening our eyes to the concept of different Umwelt serves as a metaphor for the need to celebrate diversity.

*"We are all one race, even if how I see my world is not equal to how you see your world,"*  
he says.

## EVERYTHING WORKS WITH DENIM

From Spring in the City, through the All-White Look, and all the way to the Weekend Wardrobe – this year, we've seen a great variety of aesthetics on the SS23 runways. Among the trends, we can distinguish cargo pants, maxi skirts, vivid colours, gold jewellery, sheer clothing and leather. But in most cases, there is one repeating fabric that seems to rule all looks – denim.



Marine Serre., british  
vogue, Shop The 10 Key  
Spring/Summer 2023  
Trends To Know Now



Kate Moss in bottega  
veneta, vogue

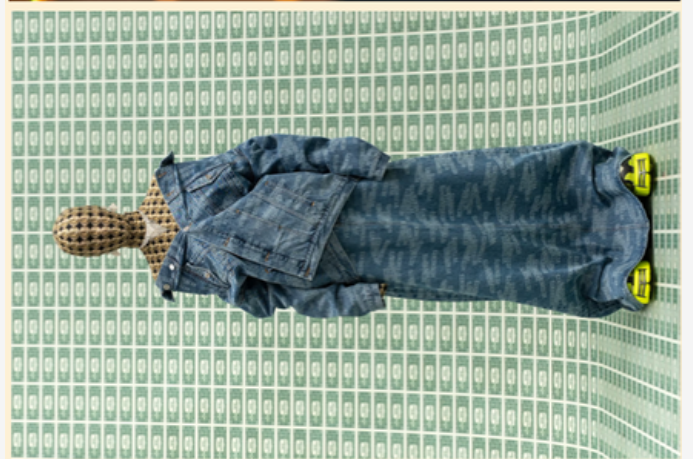
Denim will always be timeless – whether you match it with an elegant blouse or explore the different styles and tailoring, this is the fabric that has been fashionable for decades, with all its variations. Textile artists can experiment with patterns and looks, as denim provides a blank canvas to channel creativity. In 2023, this particular property of denim has been revolutionizing the fashion world.

Some say that the nowadays jeans fashion is greatly inspired by the 90s' fashion trends and their inherent effortlessness. Significantly visible is the comeback to 'mom jeans' and 'baggy jeans', which you can casually throw together with a T-shirt, blazer, or trench coat, made from any type of material.

On the other hand, we can also see the less-than-usual denim looks that are trending in fashion right now. The list of newly-emerged denim garments is endless: maxi skirts, vests, dresses, low-rise, overalls, tops, or jackets. The designers cannot get enough – whether it is Diesel, Burberry, Prada, or Levi's, we can see the impact of unique denim design on high fashion.



Kim Kardashian West Steps Out in Fall's Most Daring Boot,  
vogue



fashion united: Runway to Retail: Long denim skirts;  
Vetements Fall/Winter 2022;



fashion united: Runway to Retail: Long denim skirts; diesel  
pre-fall 2023

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The denim-on-denim trend is another homage to streetwear of the 90s and 00s. Designers explore patterns by composing the whole look only from denim, using a jacket and jeans or coat and top, all made from denim.



Paris, spring 2022 ready-to-wear Photographed by Acielle / StyleDuMonde - vogue



GIOVANNI GIANNONI/WWD, spring trends 2023

What we know for sure from denim's historical significance and the more recent trends of 2023 is that it will never disappear. After all, everything works with denim.

## BARBARA MIELECH MARCINIAK



vogue, friends, The Best '90s- and Noughties-Inspired Denim to Wear Now, From 90210 to Friends



# THE SURREAL FASHION UNIVERSE OF THOM BROWNE'S 2023 FALL COLLECTION

Paper space-styled ceiling with suspended stars and planets, all hanging above a crashed white plane, placed on a giant clock painted on the floor. The show started with a brief introduction: We find ourselves in the desert. A plane has crashed. The ominous words were accompanied by an equally unsettling ticking sound and a mysterious fairytale-like melody, as well as subdued lighting. All of that was heard and viewed by the audience in an almost planetarium-like format. The setting created for Thom Browne's Ready-To-Wear fall 2023 collection runway was bizarre, yet also magical and beautiful. The event took place slightly more than two months ago, during New York Fashion Week (NYFW) - a globally known fashion event held each February and September. Every year the event brings together top designers whose pieces and shows immensely impact the fashion industry and dictate the trends for the following season.

The way Browne presents his designs may seem unreal, out of this world, but for him this unusual style of expression has become commonplace. His tendency to represent each collection as an individually suited story, reinterpreting known motifs is visible throughout his 20-year-long career. For instance, in 2015 his NYFW Ready-To-Wear show was set in an operating theater scenography to emphasize the gothic style of the garments. This happening was put on *The Most Unforgettable Moments From 35 Years of New York Fashion Week* list created by *Vogue*.

The fall 2023 show was not an exception. References to the, beloved by many, novella, *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry became obvious for some viewers already upon seeing the first two models. The assumptions were later confirmed when the next models began to show up, dressed as the characters portrayed in the book. The narrator, speaking over the soundtrack, was introducing each one, gradually engaging the audience deeper and deeper into the show. Browne used the story to draw a connection between his own work and the values represented in the original book - thinking outside of the box in order to break the routine and usual thinking patterns.

The first model wore a costume meant to symbolize the Pilot.

ze the Pilot. Her white, off-the-shoulder corset one piece with a turtleneck in a globe-like pattern underneath was a creative take on an astronaut's uniform. It accentuated the curves by maximizing them in the shoulders and hip areas. The next design was the representation of the Prince, with the appearance of a true dreamer. The model wore a partially undone, oversized blazer and as on the commonly known illustration of the character - had blonde hair. The following models, gathered in groups walking at a rather slow pace and taking unusual routes, wandering in different directions, embodied the rest of *The Little Prince* characters. After the brightly painted, floor-length gowns, the show became dominated by exaggerated classic silhouettes, resembling an office dress code combined with unexpected elements, such as creatively shaped purses. Later, the designer introduced us to more patterns and distorted forms of clothing, progressively exhibiting more deformed proportions. Browne presented complex outfits including miscellaneous layers or unconventionally worn traditional pieces, surprising the audience each time the models walked out on the runway. The unique hairstyles and makeup completed the looks and were certainly quintessential to the expressed vision.

Even though some critics questioned the wearability of the garments, there is no doubt that both the collection and its presentation were absolutely breathtaking. It was an astonishing comeback of Thom Browne to the New York Fashion Week after a year-long break. The designer's ideas may not be predictable, but one aspect of his work can be taken for granted - it will always stand out in the ind





## A SHOUTING SILENCE OF WOMEN CONFINED - THE CONUNDRUM OF VERMEER'S DEPICTIONS



*Woman with a Water Jug, c. 1662*

When studying Johannes Vermeer's art, it does not take long to realize that a clear majority of his paintings depict women as the dominant subject matter. In occurrences where men are seen on his canvases, they are most probably paying court to or superintending the women. Yet, it is not the choice of gender that is intriguing and creates the mystery for me, but rather the way in which, through his paintings, he so efficiently shows the blankness of life lived by women in the 17th century.

Almost all women in Vermeer's depictions are shown in an enclosed domestic environment. To boot, they are usually shown in the midst of performing domestic chores (cleaning, cooking etc.) Through such depictions Vermeer not only guides us to think of the roles within the household, but also, more broadly, within society.

*"The emphasis on women is logical in the work of an artist who was entirely devoted to the painting of interiors, as the domestic space was the realm which society had assigned to women."*

When examining certain paintings I feel as if the depiction of the woman resembles a blank canvas with nothing to offer.

*„Women in the 17th century were second-class citizens, subject to their fathers from birth and later handed over like chattel to their husbands.“*

Yet, it seems as though Vermeer did not intend to show those women as experiencing oppression or obeying to their husbands. Rather, he desperately tried to establish their role as independent from men.

What I see in their eyes is not pain, it's a lack of emotions. To me, their faces seem blank. And it is that blankness that is so distinct and so powerful in Vermeer's portrayals. Their usual, unsophisticated clothing, lack of jewelry and white headgear - symbolizing the purity and bareness, resembling a white canvas - the still actions they perform, avoiding vigorous motion, to the numerous visits from men, speak so loudly.

The woman's enclosure in the interior reflects her own interiority, her gap in knowledge and life experience. In the 17th century it was exclusively men, who were able to perhaps become travelers and gain something from the life they lived; women were limited to the household. Thus, in Vermeer's paintings the household space becomes a metaphor for the hollowness of their soul.



*Officer with a Laughing Girl, c. 1567*

When men occasionally appear in Vermeer's work they do so in elaborate clothing, with pride, and often accompanied by a sort of attribute. In "Officer and Laughing Girl" (1657), the man is sitting with his back turned to the viewer. He is wearing a bright red colored overcoat with puffy sleeves, and an extensive hat. Facing him there sits a pale woman, attentively watching him. It seems as if, at that moment at least, her life consisted of only him and what he is saying. In his works, Vermeer often included a painting on the wall behind the characters. He used it as a way to add context and meaning to the scene, as well as to add compositional drama to the otherwise empty walls. In "Officer and Laughing Girl", there is a map, which points to the idea of the officer having traveled to many places. It creates a contrast between the countless opportunities that the world has to offer and the limited experiences of the woman confined.

How does one deal with a life so bounded and restricted? This seemingly irrelevant presence gripped my attention. Those minds, surrounded by walls, must have had hidden, unrevealed thoughts which Vermeer was determined to and, ever so faintly, managed to reveal.

(Note that the article is based solely on my own interpretation)



*The Wine Glass, c. 1658*

## SWEET & ROMANTIC- A REVIEW

22nd of February 2023. *sweet & romantic*. Judging by the title and the PG warnings on the website of the theater, I was expecting sexual elements in the play, but I thought they were going to be over-the-top, overdone. I went inside the theater and sat down, surrounded by teenagers, many jittery and giggling with their friends.

Finally, lights out. The play began with a long, repetitive scene of masturbation, almost as if the directors purposefully wanted the audience to wait for its end, to build up a sense of anticipation for what will finally happen next.

*sweet & romantic* tells a story of a teenager searching for who they are, trying to determine their gender identity, but also trying to find their place in the world.

The first relationship we encounter is one of a mother and a child, or rather, the struggle of a worried parent trying to understand her child, looking for a way to be accepted into their world. While this plotline remains in the background, the story shifts to portray another relationship - a romantic one, between Ari and their partner. They fall in love with each other, unexpectedly, without a plan or intention. Things get more complicated when the characters try to determine who they are - how to define their relationship and each other. This tension culminates when the girlfriend creates an intimate movie, finally realizing her artistic visions and passions. However, she does that at the cost of breaching boundaries between private life and creative expression.



Wera Makowskx and Jakub Zalasa - the directors and script writers, who were inspired by contemporary writers, like Jack Halberstram, bell hooks or Buying Chul-Han - touch upon a number of problems and dilemmas of current society.

They explore the isolating effects of social media and technology, as well as the disorienting reality of men redefining or finding themselves in contemporary society.

Even after I exited the theater, the play stayed with me for a long time. And it wasn't just the plot which left me thinking - the scenography also left a huge imprint on my mind. While the play was set on a small, simple stage, the creators used technology so skillfully that the audience was never bored. For example, whenever action was happening outdoors, instead of watching the actors live, the audience got to see the scenes on film, as if we were suddenly transported from the theater to a cinema. Additionally, the creators used movable sheets of fabric, thereby enlarging and dividing the stage, and metaphorically creating new places of action. Without overdoing it, Makowskx and Zalasa made the scenography entertaining; yet, it did not take attention away from the plot itself.

Judging by *sweet & romantic*, I can say with confidence that Teatr Rozmaitości is a theater you want to visit. Not only are the storylines engaging, but most importantly they are heavy with meaning and worthwhile reflections. Unlike many current works, however, the message is not 'in your face,' it's implicit, yet carries great relevance to today's society.

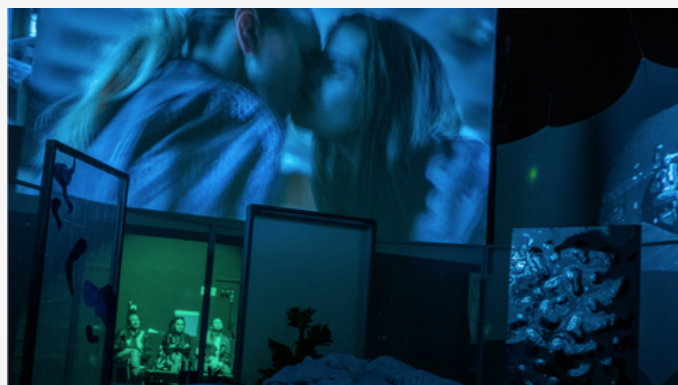


photo credits: Teatr Rozmaitości

## WHAT MAKES MUSIC MUSIC

Easter is supposed to be a time spent with family. As lovely as that sounds, there are a lot of less pleasant things that lurk behind the term 'family-time'. Whether they are sparked by the ever so controversial topic of politics or, as in this case, a difference of opinion on what constitutes art, disagreements and heated discussions are almost inevitable. Riding in a car together, my grandfather could not bear the rap music my siblings and I played from the speakers.

*'Can this even be considered music?'*  
he asked with a frown.

Well... can it? As it turns out, my grandfather is not alone in his belief that it shouldn't be. Ben Shapiro, a conservative American political commentator, stated in a 2019 interview that rap isn't real music. He believes that music has to be categorised by three elements – harmony, melody, and rhythm – and that rap only possesses rhythm. This, in turn, sparked a debate online regarding the position of rap in music. While my grandpa's comment expressed his personal dislike of the songs we were playing rather than anything else, the general tendency of dismissing rap as an art form should be more deeply analyzed.

Rap emerged in the Bronx, New York in the 1970s, it is a genre focused on storytelling and rhythm. It is sometimes classified as spoken poetry, recognised for its lyricism; powerful imagery, metaphors and wordplay are all techniques often associated with rap.

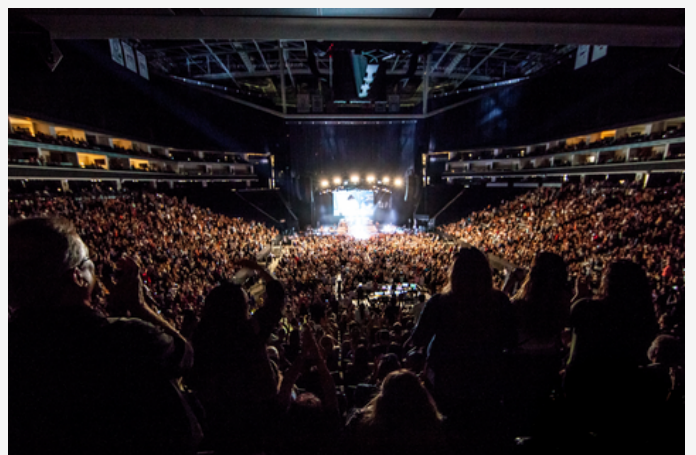
The reason why some people tend to dismiss rap as a genre may have a lot to do with its history. Tom Huizenga explains in his NPR article *Why Do People Hate Rap And Opera?* that music tastes are strongly tied to 'self-esteem, personal branding and creating social divisions based on things like class and education.'



Huizenga brings up an American Sociology Review article, which showed that people often utilise their music tastes to create "symbolic boundaries" between themselves and others. This is especially the case with genres like rap or opera, which both carry a lot of stereotypes around them. To quote Huizenga opera is perceived to be "for rich, white, elderly snobs", while "rap is made by poor, young, black thugs." Some people reject these groups, and with that, the genres they represent, while others see them as an opportunity to become a part of a broader community.

As professor Fernando Orejuela writes in an article for the official Carnegie Hall website, rap originated as "a product of African American, Afro-Caribbean and Latino inner-city communities plagued by poverty, the proliferation of drugs, and gang violence in the 1960s and early 1970s. Some MCs and DJs were members or former members of gangs who used DJing, dancing, and MCing as an alternative to gang warfare." In recent years, the genre started entering the mainstream but rap artists still tend to remain socially and politically conscious in their music. Orejuela quotes the example of Kanye West, whose lyrics explore "a range of topics including his middle-class upbringing, anti-Black racism, corporatism, and his faith presented in full self-aggrandizing style."

Whether we love or hate rap, there is no denying its impact on the music industry as a whole. The genre has revolutionized music production, and it's so vital to the history of people of color in America; it should be recognized as a legitimate art form regardless of our own opinion on it.



# "ALL I WANT IS FOR PEOPLE TO LISTEN TO MY MUSIC"

## LETTERS FROM YOUNG MUSICIANS

Music. A substantial part of the entertainment industry, performing arts and my daily bus ride. Those 12 octaves provide an ideal lens to view the development of human culture; its form and purpose which differs from one to another.

Flair of music can be seen everywhere, my biased and personal favorite being during live performances of Warsaw artists. Hereby, I present the best of the best, young musicians, and the politics behind their music genius.

*"Generally writing is like therapy, I love to play with words and I think I do it for myself but in such a way, so that everyone can somehow identify with it"*

- Szymon Gajdewski, Freak Situation Band

Szymon Gajdewski plays in 'Freak Situation'- a band made up of 4 people. He shared with us his beginnings with music:

*"I make music because I love music, and from the very beginning, when I got really into it, I knew I wanted to do it. I started playing guitar while learning songs by Nirvana and Oasis, and that's how I developed my songwriting style"*

Inspiring himself with true masterpieces by Kurt Cobain and Liam Gallagher, Szymon brings his own art into life. He describes music as his personal escape, but also as a piece of himself, which he is eager to share.



*"The song I'm most proud of is 'All That Together.' It's a tune about a broken heart, a downtrodden generation and generally about a shithead's thoughts on the world around him. I think a lot of people can identify with this song."*

-says he when asked about his favorite song.

Quite frankly, I think we rather feel the music than listen to it. It's a certain getaway from all the surrounding chaos, which we often undergo in our mind.. It's a form of self expression and, perhaps even therapy. Another vocalist and guitar player takes up a half of a band named 'Assembled'- Bartek Turski.

*"I convert my emotions into music notes, every feeling is a different song"*

Bartek claims, proving the intensity of his passion. Passion laid out on paper and transformed into astounding live performances as well as alluring songs produced by Assembled.



Jędrzej Szczepański (jędrzej hibob), on the other hand, presents music as a completely different facet of his life.

*"The main message I try to express through my songs is as simple as the love I have for my friends; I love making music with them and performing. Through my music I try to show how much they shape my life and change my perspective daily. It's not really about views or likes. I really do it as a form of my own expression, a way for me to share my life to which I know other people can have fun to".*

Politics behind the life of Jędrzej Hibob cover mainly his friends, and their influence on him and his music.

His upcoming album is filled with songs on everyday life, time spent with friends, family; things important to everyone which is what makes Jędreń's music special and unique.

*"Music is a part of my life, and always will be. I can easily connect it with my future, but I know it also largely depends on fate and luck. When I'm an artist, every moment is a wow moment; every concert, every new song. I don't know why or where it gets me, but I know I am enjoying my momentum"*

Jędreń presents a completely different angle, it's something he does simply because he loves it, it's not a form of an escape from his life, it's his way of sharing it with others. By writing catchy rhymes he is on his way to achieve big things. Right now, he is proud to do what he loves, especially alongside his friends.

*"Oh of course I also make music so my boys can use it to pick up girls"*

With the substantial development of the music industry online, one may wonder what exactly does it mean for young musicians? Thankfully, Ziemek shared his own approach with us.

*"How does the Internet affect music?"*

*Now, thanks to Tik tok, it's much easier to get on people's headphones and promote your music with a video just 15 seconds long. After hearing one song over and over again people start paying attention, listening to, downloading it etc. I think it is helpful for promotion, but, in my opinion, it may quickly escalate, and result in increasing popularity of music of worse quality instead of music from artists who put their whole heart into it, and actually try to convey something. I myself do not use tiktok for promotion, I try to gain a fanbase at concert, and by simply; releasing music."*

My last question is for our readers; If you still haven't been to one of the live concerts of these artists, please tell me, what are you even doing?



## POETRY

### COMMENTARY:

In this edition of Work of Art, I wanted to step outside my usual poetry series (Seasons and Self) and explore the theme of family, the different meanings of the term, and finally, my own relationship with my family.

The first poem, Plagioclimax, dissects my impression of my father. The themes were heavily inspired by Charles Bukowski's Bluebird. Using forest imagery, I wanted to portray how toxic masculinity affects father-daughter relationships.

My longest poem to date, familial, is my contribution to the discussion of family trauma, and the expectations placed on children to break out of that cycle. I lean heavily on the contrast between communist Poland vs its current political state.

### PLAGIOCLIMAX

Sometimes I wander through a leafy forest  
and I see scratches on the wood.  
Is there an animal trying to claw its way out?  
Who's suppressing the shoots and green  
branches?  
The forest is so polite in its pain,  
So kind in its rationality and seriousness.

Sometimes the forest is angry at itself  
and it burns.  
It blinds my eyes in rage  
because rage is good.  
You're supposed to be angry.  
You were taught to  
be strong  
and mad.  
A man.

Then there's a break.  
A flower.  
Just one.  
A hydrangea.

Sometimes I can see vines start curling on the  
ground,  
almost begging to be let out,  
to let the forest finally be inhabited.  
There are sparks in your eyes  
as I tell you about my newest read.  
It's amused  
and longing  
and curious  
and melancholic  
and jealous  
and finally, defeated.

I look down again and the vines are nowhere to  
be found.

Usually, it's a healthy leafy forest.  
It has the thickest oak barks.  
I love to sit in the branches  
with my notebook. I love  
eating there.  
Usually, I'll wipe my tears with a stray leaf  
and lean on a tree to rest.  
I might trip over a root.  
You'll bandage my scraped knee,  
again, with care.  
Care is good.  
Care is man.  
Care is husband and father.  
Care is fresh bread for breakfast  
and visits on Wednesday evenings.

You can put your strength down.  
Let's go see the ocean now.

## POETRY

### FAMILIAL

i was born out of starvation  
and smelly sewers.  
i am a child of seedy streets  
shady trees  
muddy rivers.  
i was born underwater  
from hope and humility.

that night messiah had died  
buried by the hospital rubble  
from '69 protests.  
turns out he was dead all along,  
just a few rats in a coat  
carrying sepsis and heroin.

i am a child of greed and all that's ugly.  
washed away by seedless flowers,  
brought to the table by rotten chicken,  
i am the only hope for salvation.  
i am the dream that times are changin'.  
i am the torch of the revolt.

---

my heart is hidden by a patchwork blanket,  
so that it evokes passion and bidding.  
in it, i see scraps of my family,  
it is a sensory overload  
of memories and déjà vu's.  
on some days, my heart is conserved  
in a bottle of vodka.  
sometimes, it is cradled by a father  
(mistaking his son for his wife  
and fucking him mercilessly  
until the boy cries).  
one day, my heart is covered in gold dust,  
a miracle of a meeting,  
smoke from a campfire in the summer,  
glistening silver lakes,  
two pairs of emeralds meeting each other,  
at once.

my heart is a patchwork blanket  
of broken VHS tapes and forgotten vinyls,  
begging to be repaired,  
begging to be untangled and hugged.

---

i nearly drowned once, you know,  
i had to have been four at the time.  
sometimes i wonder if i ever resurfaced.

---

i am young and war inside me is raging.  
as a child, you put on your helmet,  
you learn how to hold a rifle,  
you shoot your first newborn,  
and finally, forget how to be afraid.  
a fight is no longer a necessity,  
it is what defines your humanity.

you fight your first teacher,  
you call her *dummy* and throw a fit.  
your *mommy* picks you off the floor  
and apologizes to the poor woman.  
you fight your mother  
and swear to never become like her.  
*mother is stupid and weak, you laugh with your dad,  
she doesn't understand our world.*

*(years later, when all the fight has left your body,  
when your only family is the cold floor of your  
balcony,  
you realize you're exactly like your mother.  
you notice that you're bleeding  
all over the floor  
and think, this is what she felt all this time.  
after all, a daughter is cursed with the same fate.)*

you fight your dad.  
he fights back.  
for the first time, you lose.  
you're four and you're officially a woman.

---

POETRY

i grew into a lavish sort of hatred.  
the one you cover up with big chandeliers  
and office happy hours.  
where your blatant feelings of inadequacy  
don't matter anymore  
if you can enjoy fresh coca cola  
and greasy mcdonalds nuggets.  
all the queues and papers are forgotten  
in the face of the Gods of Prosperity,  
who bless you not with freedom,  
but a new iphone or mercedes.

our new beacon of hope,  
when we're drugged to sleep  
by repeated turning of a page,  
is knowledge.

i feel it between my shoulder blades,  
it's in the dirt behind my ears,  
it's now ingrained in my system,  
like those inventions of the west.

i know a world beyond their comprehension,  
a place where the walls of our cage  
are so far they are nearly invisible.  
a world where you were never the calf  
led by your own father to the slaughterhouse.  
where black isn't attached to and bruised.  
in a world of rapid stillness,  
i am the Chosen One.

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all of my childhood was scraped out of me  
with dirty forceps with leftover blood  
from my mother.  
they opened me up on the table  
on May 1st, 2011,  
and then again in April of 2014.  
they named me their god of vengeance.  
they put graves on my shoulders.  
they gave me a gram of oxycontin,  
a bejeweled, extravagant gun,  
a benefit of the doubt,  
and said 'shoot'.

shoot for the sky.  
you killed the competition.  
your performance kicked ass.  
you nailed that passage.  
you hammered, you slayed, you executed it  
perfectly.  
dead and deceased.  
black and bruised.  
here and now and in the future,  
i am hope for a better life.  
here and now, i'm two and the world is still in  
technicolor.  
underwater and drowning.  
in the future, i'm four and my husband is forty.  
in the past, she calls me twenty times  
asking for twenty more coins  
for twenty more lottery tickets.  
my mother doesn't know my name.  
manic and depressed.  
on and off medication.  
here and now and in the future,  
i am white paint on a red flag.  
fluent and fluid.  
knowing and blind.  
here and now and in the future,  
i am her and him and them.  
familiar. cruel.  
familial. hurt.  
in the past and now and in the future,  
i am a dream...

POETRY

UNKNOWN

SERENE SATIRE OF MY  
FLAWED AFFECTION

We're overthinkers, aren't we?

Who are you now and what will you be?

The apocalyptic rise of one and  
the same

Is it as simple as a case of a different name?



## POETRY

## THE ART OF AIRPLANE LUNCHES

The art of airplane lunches, I think, is very complex. I found them to be the key to discovering the gratitude for my life's chaosness and the clutter of my personality.

A fine tray covered with (what should resemble) a tablecloth. It's off-white colour stating its cleanliness. On it, three boxes; two are silver, one- white. The food, neatly segregated into its compartments; seeming untouched, as though prepared with maximum attentiveness and close thought. An outstanding-looking piece of whole wheat bread roll, served upon my choice, ready to fulfil its role as a base for the butter, shining with excellence. Condiments supplied in small sachets in case of any imperfections, as a way to avoid distaste. And utensils, wrapped in a thick serviette protecting them from insecurity and uncertainty.

*What an example this creates for me to follow!*

Notwithstanding, the meat was gooey, and the pasta tasteless. The bread was stiff, old, and all the vegetables were cold. The dessert - a falsifier. Sugarcoating its bitterness, leaving me vexed and frustrated with no promise of an energised smile.

I compare my life to airplane lunches or rather, I notice the contrast between those two arts. I realise the absurdity of organisation and the lies of order I never compiled to. The affront I was served for lunch that day filled my delusional head with a negligible rationale, and a sort of contentment in the tangled and tortuous life I live.





EWA RACZKOWSKA





