

Senior Spotlight:
Kate McNamara
By Mary McGrath

Senior Kate McNamara contributes to the school spirit and activities through not only her musical talents, but her ability to be her true self in multiple activities. Kate is a member of the MHS marching band and orchestra, the manager of the MHS boys’ and girls’ wrestling teams, and part of the fall tennis and spring golf teams.

The senior contributes to the MHS music department in many ways. As a member of both marching band and the orchestra, Kate plays two instruments and has key parts in both programs. In the marching band, she plays the trumpet. She joined during her sophomore year because she loved “watching the marching band perform.” Throughout her years with the program, her love for music and the instrument has grown greatly. On top of this, the senior remarked, “My playing has also gotten better!”

She joined the band with little experience on the instrument, but over time found her way to section leader and first trumpet. Kate explained that the amount of practice needed for trumpet promotes discipline as well as hard work. So it’s even more impressive that she also is a part of the orchestra as a violin player.

She has been playing the violin since fourth grade and has always enjoyed the instrument. Kate also claimed that she enjoyed getting the “best of both worlds” because the marching band and orchestra are very different in some ways, yet still similar in others.

Kate loves everything about music: how it creates an outlet for her to express her emotions and helps her let off some steam. The senior says she could easily sit at a piano for hours and be completely happy. Her love of music also stemmed from her family; her dad plays both the trumpet and piano and is always encouraging her to continue her music.

As head of the MHS boys’ and girls’ wrestling teams, McNamara’s job includes taking videos at each match, writing down the stats for each, and having a clear understanding of the sport. Kate was first approached by a friend during her freshman year and thought of it as something fun to do in the winter months. In the beginning, Kate saw these tasks as overwhelming, but her love for the sport grew, and she enjoys going to watch the matches.

On the MHS tennis team, Kate enjoys both playing tennis and watching others, specifically when the singles players continue the rally without missing the ball for an extremely long time. Overall, the senior cherished her experience with the sport. She found that the tennis team was a great way to meet new people with whom she would have had no connection it weren’t for tennis. Many of the other tennis players were also a part of the orchestra, which was a connection that Kate really appreciated. The senior explained how she was mostly going to miss the physical activity that was involved with this program; she loved being able to get exercise every day while still having fun.

As to her favorite memory, Kate mentions Battle of the Classes freshman year. She remarked that the lip-sync and skit portion of this event were the most fun and thought it was funny to learn what they were supposed to do through the actual activity. She also loved this because she had the ability to be “so random and different.”

Kate pointed to Ms. Nalepa, a co-teacher in Kate’s sophomore and junior year science classes, as her role model. The senior called her an “underrated hero” because she cared about each student, even if she didn’t have to. Kate explained how she wants to be as caring as Ms. Nalepa is when she becomes a teacher. In the future, Kate wants to be a music educator in either a middle school or a high school. “I just want to make a difference in a child’s life like others did for me,” she said.

Kate shared some advice to the underclassmen: be true to yourself. The senior said that this is the most important thing, and it doesn’t matter if you feel weird; “it’s okay to be weird.” We wish Kate the best of luck with the rest of her high school career and any future endeavors!

Upcoming Major Events
By Mary McGrath

SPRING MUSICAL

The Metuchen High School Footlighters are proud to present: *Working*. It’s a musical based on Studs Terkel’s sociology book *Working: People Talk About What They Do All Day and How They Feel About What They Do*. The author famously referred to himself as a “guerrilla journalist with a tape recorder. Terkel’s oral history included interviews of people from different places and occupations.

The musical adaptation is similar in spirit as it features people from all walks of life. Each character has a different occupation, about which they sing throughout their show.

In the beginning of the musical, each character starts their day and gets ready for their jobs. Their day-to-day lives intertwine as time goes on. Towards the second half of the musical, the characters sing about their accomplishments and explain how they missed time with their family due to their work.

Although the novel was written by Studs Terkel, the musical was created by Stephen Schwartz and Nina Faso. The performance dates will be April 7, 8, and 9 of 2022. Come enjoy the great performances by the entire cast and crew!

BAND DISNEY TRIP

The Metuchen High School music department is going to Disney! Starting March 18, the band, orchestra, and chorus will learn from other musical experts at Disney. Each group will attend workshops and classes to gain insight from other musical people.

The all-inclusive trip allows students to visit Universal Studios, Hollywood Studios, and the Magic Kingdom. The entire trip is scheduled with a tight itinerary, and there isn’t much free time, but any time available will go to visiting the parks. The music department’s trip starts on Thursday, March 18, 2022 and continues until Sunday, March 21.

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Bite-sized personalities: why you lack a sense of self

By Sophie Villacampa

My name is Sophie Villacampa. I am a junior in high school, a Leo, an ENFJ, an artist, and a writer. But what do any of those words really mean? Apart from the label of “junior,” which is pretty important, does the rest really matter? Because a zodiac sign is not all I am, my art or my writing is not all there is to me, and I frankly don’t even know what “ENFJ” really means in the grand scheme of things. But to many people, these few short words give huge insight into my personality, allowing them to make a snap judgement about my character as well as give a basis for their own. We label ourselves in countless ways, using a plethora of personality tests to put a “type” on our character. We conflate our entire identities with mere sexuality and gender labels, acting like they are the be-all end-all. We even resort to basing our disposition on how well it matches our clothing style. But why do we do this? Why do we put so much emphasis on condensing a whole person to a few words, or even a few letters?

For some, extensive labeling can provide a sense of belonging; there is safety in their tribes. Personality types seemingly make it easy to understand yourself and the world around you. What particularly interested me in the area of personality types was the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, or MBTI. With some light reasoning from the MBTI website, I found that your personality is a combination of four letters; me being ENFJ means my categories are extroverted (E), intuitive (N), feeling (F), and judging (J). The first letter corresponds to which “world” you focus on—inner (introverted), or outer (extroverted). The second refers to how you process information, by either focusing on the basics (sensing) or analyzing more in-depth (intuitive). The third decides how you make decisions—are you logical (thinking), or do you make more emotional (feeling) decisions? And finally, the fourth letter deals with decision-making; someone who is very starkly opinionated and likes to have things decided falls under “judging,” or J, while someone who is open to new ideas is “perceiving,” or P.

‘In a society with a short attention span that likes the idea of summing up people in bite-sized tidbits of information, the easiest thing to do is give yourself a personality type and stick to it in every way possible. But to stifle the things that make us different from even the most similar person to us is to lose what makes us human.’

Four categories, two opposing possible answers for each category. This test essentially claims that there are sixteen kinds of people. And I have a fundamental moral disagreement with tests like that. It is impossible to live your life by a set of rules for your personality, because personality develops naturally based on the formative relationships you make, the media you consume, and the hobbies you enjoy. The things that really matter about a person aren’t the things that this test sums up.

In a world of nearly 8 billion people, there cannot only be 16 personalities, because it is the small things that make a person. Think about your mother—is your favorite thing about her the fact that she is extroverted and not introverted? No, it is the way her eyes crinkle when she smiles or the silly dance she does when she’s happy. What do you love most about your best friend? That they are “intuitive” and not “sensing,” or is it how they bake you cookies when you’re feeling down? The things we love in our favorite people are the traits that are unique to them—the smile lines, the goofy laugh, the way they pronounce a certain word. And I guarantee you that Isabel Briggs Myers and Katharine Briggs didn’t know those things about your mother or best friend.

So what happens to a person who goes crazy trying to figure out what to call themselves with the utmost concision? It seems that the more one obsesses over trying to figure out exactly who they are, the more they lose themselves. Who you are will come with time; hardly anyone knows who they really are in high school. Think about it for a moment. We exist in a society where people are so eager to be completely sure of themselves, they sum up their personality in a four-letter acronym. The desperation in trying to make ourselves a neat and tidy set list of character traits is astounding. For some odd reason, we have determined that if you don’t know exactly who and what you are at all times, you are completely lost. This attitude stifles individuality, making people think they have to fit into boxes in order to be accepted, to be palatable. Furthermore, we are tricked into labeling ourselves in or-

der to further consumerist culture: you buy more things to make you look more like your chosen archetype.

Say, for instance, I decided to run with the “artist” label. There would be pressure to buy mom jeans and Doc Martens and cool sweaters, to listen to indie music, to have a mysterious and alluring aura about me. Why should anyone think they have to march to the beat of the stereotypes’ drums? Nobody can act or look consistent all the time. Wouldn’t it be boring if we did? Maybe for some it is nice to be recognizable, to be easily described; but I would rather be unlabeled than unexciting.

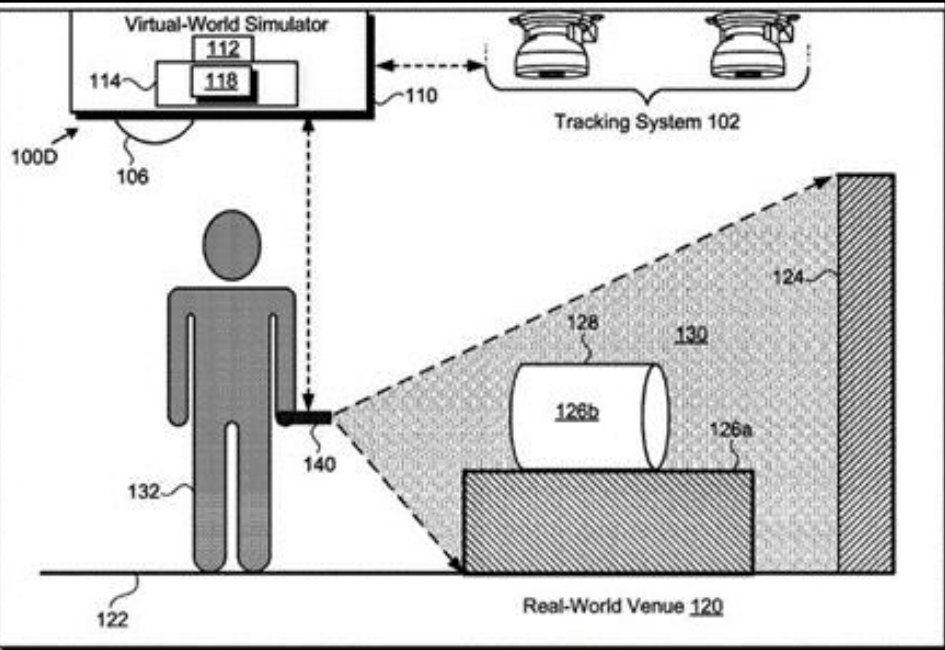
In a society with a short attention span that likes the idea of summing up people in bite-sized tidbits of information, the easiest thing to do is give yourself a personality type and stick to it in every way possible. But to stifle the things that make us different from even the most similar person to us is to lose what makes us human.

While many of us may think it helps us understand ourselves better to utilize tools like the MBTI, I would like to suggest taking those letters out of your social media bios. If you feel completely lost without your labels, to the point where you end up having no idea who you are or how to exist without them, it might be time to evaluate their effectiveness. Try to start labeling only when necessary (i.e. your grade level or occupation); do not compartmentalize every aspect of your personality into a few words. In fact, try not to think of it in language at all. Even the greatest writers admitted that there are certain things language simply cannot do. So why try to describe, when you can just be? Let people figure you out from getting to know you and observing your behavior, not from your set list of words that are supposed to encapsulate you.

And, dear reader, I guarantee you’ll feel much better if you stop trying to figure out who you are, and start letting life show you.

Disney’s new technology will soon change how we see the world (literally)

By Ben Solasky



Imagine this: you’re walking around Disney with your family when a holographic image of Mickey Mouse pops up to your right, or your favorite princess emerges to the left. It sounds pretty far-fetched, right? Not really.

In late December, Disney filed for what is described as a “virtual-world simulator” patent, which is set to project holographic images onto physical spaces. As seen in the images above, these schematics are what this new technology would entail. An article by *Business Insider* mentions that this technology puts Disney a leap closer to having a theme park in the metaverse.

Also, according to this patent, you’ll be able to physically interact with these characters, but the people around you won’t be able to see the same thing you’re seeing. Disney will essentially have the power to manufacture a customized interactive experience for you, and no one person will have the same experience you had. You won’t even need to wear special glasses to see these images.

After seeing this new technology for the first time, I immediately felt a sense of unease for the future and what it may hold, especially with technology having an increasing amount of control over our lives each and every day.

Continued on page 7

Snow

By Alex Osborn-Jones

Her dress blended in with the snow. With each step, flurries of white powder rose around her like fine dust, kissing softly at her heels. She smiled for the first time that night. Her legs leapt and danced across the colorless field, taking her further and further away from the thing she dreaded most...the thing she wanted more than anything.

She had kicked her heeled shoes off when she began running, and only now was she truly starting to feel the cold. Painful spikes shot up her feet each time they hit the ground, as if she was walking on a bed of nails and not pillowy new snow. She could not stop running, no matter how much it hurt to continue on; this much she was sure of. She could not turn back now, pretend that her fear had not taken complete control and driven her away from her purest desire.

A root reached up from the drift, a deep insidious black piercing through the mellow clouds. It caught her ankle and she began to fall, fall, fall. The snow cushioned the blow of her body only slightly, and a heavy *thud* resonated among the tree lines on either side. She did not get up, only turned around and heaved a great sigh, sending billowing steam out of her painted lips. She looked up, up, up at the deep navy sky.

There was no moon that night. Only the faint twinkle of stars could be seen in the vast, booming darkness. Each fragment of light sparkled, winking and giggling as they swayed in a slow dance with their black-cloaked father. She could almost hear their spritely laughs, tinkling their way into the back of her ear drums.

They were laughing at her. Their glee was not produced from the waltz with the sky, but from the tragic calamity which she had put herself in. Their sparkling was not friendly and charming, but deceitful and malicious. Tears welled in her eyes and the stars blurred into one cosmic light which cast its boisterous howl upon her. She covered her eyes with her hands and moaned a slow, long song of anguish. But her cries could not be heard over the roar of pity coming from the heavens. The sound filled her head and rattled about in her hollow rib cage, simmering inside her and mangling her organs. She grasped around for anything to ground her, anything to stifle the pandemonium.

Her fingers wrapped around her necklace, and the world fell silent. The metal pressed against her skin and drove the clamor out of her chest. In the absolute quiet, she sat up and took a deep breath, filling her lungs with the crisp winter air.

Her thumb instinctively traveled circles around the pearl and gold plates, and she thought of him. His sweet, dark eyes likely wept as her own were. She could picture him standing, combing shaking fingers through his soft brown hair as he waited and waited for her. And here she was, the white petals of her dress spread around her like a blinding bouquet of colorless flowers.

She had to go back. The sudden determination struck her with such force that she almost fell back into the frozen ground again. Slowly, she rose to her feet, brushing the wet snow from her body the best she could. As the wind picked up, flakes fell harder from the sky, obstructing her vision and the path back to her love. However painful, she pushed onwards, one foot in front of the other. From lying in the frozen ground, numbness had crept up her calves, slowly making its way up her thighs until its tight grasp made her knees lock with each step.

She tripped and buckled; every inch forward was coupled with a falter or a stumble. The piercing wind made her eyes water and close and she could not see more than a foot in front of her, a vast expanse of blurry, thick, white cotton. The brooding weather grew and grew, a colossal entity whipping her miniscule figure around with its talons of air and ice. She cried out in frustration, which only allowed the monstrous storm to invade her throat and fill her head with snow. Still, she walked on. Her persistence seemed to only anger the snow more, and it beat down upon her with ice and fury.

Images of his face flashed in her mind and warmed her shaking bones. He was the only thing propelling her forward, further into the inferno of white and howling winds. She would fix this, walk into the old building and down the carpeted hall and solve the mess she made.

She no longer felt fear. The anxiousness which had before tightly gripped her throat and dragged her away was now completely gone. The sense of power which filled her chest was almost overbearing; it was like she was walking on air, flying through the soft, majestic clouds of the heavens. She smiled quietly as she trudged onwards, the wind and ice and cold could no longer affect her.

The snow had picked up and was piling higher now, reaching not just her ankles but her calves, her knees. The ice scratched at her legs with its claws, pulling on her dress and trying to bring her home. This time when she tripped, it was not just a stumble; she fell down, down, down into the compact flakes again, so far down that the crushing weight of just the *idea* of getting up was too painful to bear. The snow smiled. Its game was won. The wind died down and the white settled

around her. She looked up and once again saw the clear black sky and faint glimmer of stars. It was so comfortable laying there, the snow was a warm blanket that enveloped her and kept her safe from the outside world. Maybe she should just rest her eyes, just for a second.

No. Panic set in and she tensed; she was not ready to give up yet. She pushed as hard as she could to try and stand up, but her body betrayed her. Her limbs screamed in opposition as she tried to move, the pain was unbearable but she pushed her left arm through the snow. She reached up to the moonless night, silently crying for help, for the stars to reach their celestial hands and carry her, to hold her tight in their sweet radiance and tell her everything would be okay. Alas, the stars continued their miniscule chatter, giggling with bright twinkles to each other.

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She looked at her arm, sticking out at an unnatural angle from the snow. Her elbow and fingertips were beginning to change color, morphing into impressive reds and purples and blacks and blues. It looked almost like a tree root, jutting out of the blank white sheet waiting to grab the ankles of those running by.

She could not move. Her mind shrieked in agony and she tried. Tried so incredibly hard to stand up. To even just shift slightly, to wiggle her fingers. Nothing worked. The cold had insidiously stalked her, waiting for the right moment to strike; its venom had been all too effective. Her eyelids fluttered, daring to close and leave her frozen in layers of snow. She struggled to hold them open, focusing yet again on the stars. She counted, one... two... three... four...

He would never find out that she was running back for him. He would never learn why or what she had done in the first place. All of her secrets, everything she wanted to scream into the night, was soon to be buried with her. Here she lay to rest in her tomb of ice and cold and blinding darkness and white.

Finally, her eyes began to droop, too heavy to keep open as small flakes piled on her lashes. She reached out one last time, fingers pointed towards the heavens. The night smiled, extended his inky arm and gracefully caressed her fingers. He picked her stiff body out of the snow and held her close, finally enveloping her in darkness.



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Join us and gain valuable experience as you hone your craft.

All are welcome!

Hourglass

By Maggie Rivera

As I drove, the streets I had known better than the very veins that ran through my arms felt so foreign. It was quite the obscure feeling; everything looked the same, but nothing was like it used to be. It had been four years since I graduated high school and moved out, but I had forgotten that the roads, which remained in my memories, really still exist. That the town where I had grown up in and then grown apart from, still functioned upon my departure. It wasn't just a place that lived deep in the files of my mind, nor was it a figment of my imagination that withered as I aged. It really still operated as it always did, but it no longer feels like mine.

Things were so much simpler then. Before I could even understand what stresses and worries were. When staring at the decorative hourglass on my fireplace mantel and watching the sand slowly sift through the narrow shape of the center of the figure could entertain me for hours. Before I knew what that sand meant. How flipping that hourglass didn't reset time like I thought it would.

As I drove up to the park that raised me, the fresh spring breeze tickled my skin. The nostalgic smell of AstroTurf and wood chips sent shivers down my spine, endless memories of the long, blistering summer days came rushing through the flood gates with no warning. It's as if I could see us. Our younger selves, rolling down the hill on the opposite side of the soccer field, that patchy grass hill used to seem so big and steep. I spent just as much time on that soccer field as I did at my own house. If it wasn't a game or a practice, it was us ripping off our shoes and socks and seeing who could stand the longest on the sizzling black rubber pellets. We would be under the blazing summer sun that would burn our youthful, innocent skin, leaving us to return home a new shade of red every day.

Once the stubborn personalities participating surrendered to the heat, leaving a winner, we would all stand back up and do it again until the sun no longer was strong enough to inflict pain. Some days, when we got older, we would walk down to the field and just sit there. We would spend hours talking, gushing, gossiping as we would pick at the stiff, plastic turf, and those burning rubber pellets. Days seemed longer then.

Once we'd exhausted ourselves of the turf, we would make our way to the graffitied playground. The wood chips would stick to our clothes, the very outline of each chip could be defined with great detail by our bare feet. The possibility of splinters didn't faze us; it never even crossed our minds. We were indestructible. We would go down the slide, our young, sweaty skin sticking to the plastic, the traction slightly stinging, but once we got to the bottom, we would race back up. Climbing up, competing against gravity. Once we got to the top, we'd slide back down and do it all over again.

We would swing. On the thick, but flexible rubber base, our thighs would squish together. We'd wrap our clammy, dirt-stained hands around the tarnishing metal chain and push off of the wood chips. Swing our legs, splitting the air as we drove forward, then swaying them back as our chest thrust through the chains. The base of the swing would start falling back, but my chest would stay there for a second longer; I was just floating there existing within that temperate air. Time would stop in that moment, as I remained there in the vitality of summer. We would swing higher and higher conducting the wind until it seemed we might flip over the pipe that held the swing above the ground. If that did happen, we would let it, then we would do it again.

I long for the days where material things never fazed me. Now life is drowned in egotistical priorities. School, success, work, the future, they overload my senses. The stress is unbearable at times, but the helpless discomfort is part of the process, right? No time resides for small town memories, or childhood friends that I believed to hold no importance to me. So I abandoned them in the past.

With my own greedy insensitivities, I abandoned her.
No time for late night calls to catch up on each other's lives.
I should have just picked up the phone.

I made my way to the old bridge that rests above the creek. The platform is still barely supported by the aging wooden planks embellished with moss, cracks, and holes. The railings' dark red paint remains chipped as the bare, exposed metal underneath continues to rust with every rainfall. I crouched down to find our names scratched into the planks with sharp rocks and sticks. Our names which remain there for as long as this bridge lasts, proof that those memories weren't dreams. I remember so clearly how we ran across the bridge towards the woods, then turned around and sprinted back towards the park. With each stride I recall how the wooden planks would bounce up from where they rested, then back down into position, then back up again. Our hands would graze the rusting, paint chipped rails. We'd run back and forth for hours.

I strolled across the bridge, and once I reached the other side, I turned to face the park, then I slid down the steep dirt slope, down to the creek. I walked under the bridge. I never thought there would be a day in which I would have to duck to make it under, but I guess I've grown. With the bridge to my right, I crouched down to touch the water. It was as gross as ever, only about six inches deep, and I couldn't even see the bottom. Nonetheless, we would still dip our feet into the creek's bone-chilling water every summer afternoon. The boys were even so bold as

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to take their tasteless graphic t-shirts off, dunk them in what I now consider a swamp, then redress as to cool off. I still remember the feeling of the dull pebbles on the bottom of my feet as the frigid water engulfed my legs up to my ankles. We would stand there in silence, me and her, the creek slowly rushing downstream, the water splitting around large rocks or branches, the lanky trees shading our scalps from the sun. Our bare feet sizzled as they reached the surface of the water. In silence, until a mutual gaze where, without any words, we knew we both had cooled off enough.

She taught me how to skip rocks on this creek, it's not very wide, and there are bigger rocks randomly protruding out from the water, so skipping rocks wasn't very successful, but I got the idea. Oh how I would skip rocks there with her for days if I could.

I stood up from testing the water. I took a step back, careful not to kick the urn I had placed next me, the urn with her remains. No more rolling down the hill, no more standing on the overheating turf, letting our feet cook. No more slide races, or swinging until we could touch the sky if we really reached. I picked her up from beside me, closing the curtains to the scene of us together by the creek for the last time. I opened the urn and slowly spilt her ashes into the flowing water. I waited and watched as she was gradually swept away under the bridge, towards the woods, and out of view.

At that moment all I could think of was that hourglass. The one we'd stare at on my mantle for hours enticed by the sand. That sand, which slipped through the opening in the slimmest center of the figure. The sand I could have valued. The sand I wasted focusing on the all-consuming unhappiness I excused for my life, instead of answering my phone. The sand I've let slip through my fingers and down the creek.



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Grandma’s flan recipe

By Gianna Hernandez



ing flan. Flan was originally a savory—not a sweet dish—flavored using fish or meat. Over time, however, a new adaptation of flan using honey instead of savory alternatives was popularized among the Romans. The caramelized sugar component of flan came along later, in Spain. After this, flan maintained the same relative composition up to this day.

Flan is delicious by itself, but can also be served with fresh fruit, such as strawberries, oranges, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries, coconut, etc. However, though fruit goes bad, flan is timeless, physically, and almost spiritually. Flan can be kept in the fridge long enough for it to be gone, devoured by friends and family. It’s the kind of dessert that is hard to forget when you have tried a good sample. It’s the kind of dessert that you can’t get enough of, and I hope that whoever tries this recipe can attest to my statement and let their eyes (and mouths) be opened to a delicious tray of flan.

The following source has been used in preparation of this article, included here for further reading:

<https://wearecocina.com/lifestyle/the-history-of-flan/>

Recipe:

- 1/2 cup of sugar to caramelize/melt
- 1 can of condensed milk
- 1 can of carnation milk
- 3 whole eggs
- 1 tsp of vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp + 2 tsp of sugar

Steps:

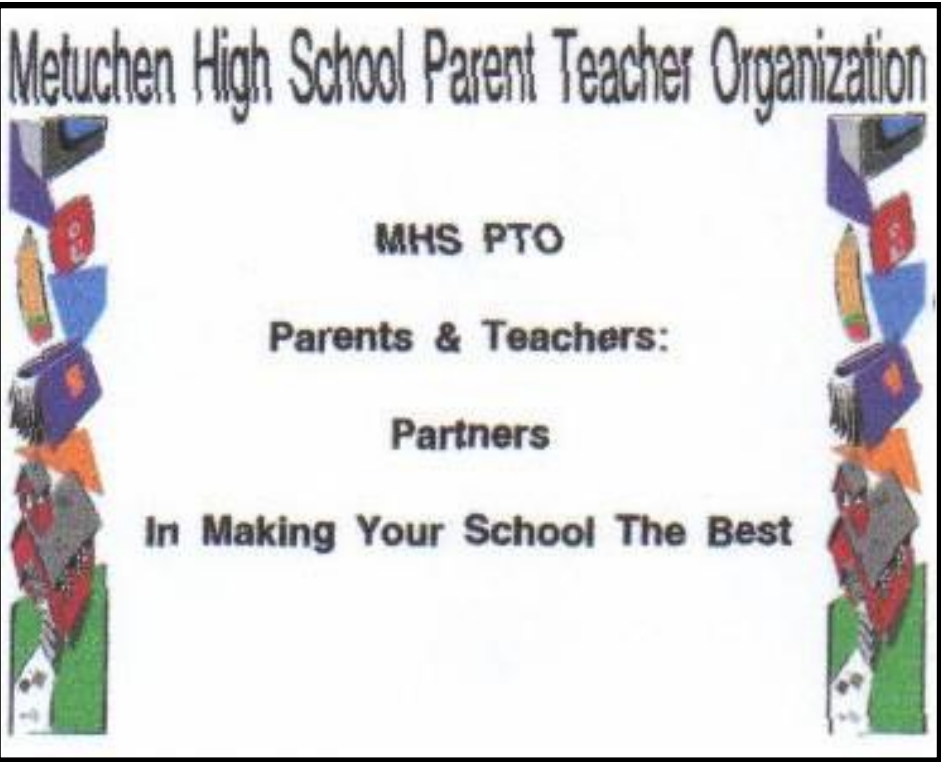
1. Caramelize/melt sugar until tan
2. Blend the rest of the recipe
3. Pour caramelized sugar in tray
4. Pour blended ingredients in tray
5. Place tray into slightly bigger tray filled halfway with water

Flan was the kind of luxury that only appeared on the table when my grandmother made it for desserts on special occasions—the kind of dessert that no one else in my family would attempt for fear of not making it the same way. As soon as it would touch the table, I would relish every bite I took, from the moment it slid upon my tongue, to when the last bite descended my throat. The glaze of the flan is rich, caramel flavor, and it seeps into the creamy, sweet egg custard. Its milky consistency and texture melts in your mouth, embedding a rich, syrupy flavor, engulfing not just your tongue, but your soul.

Recently, I made a half batch of flan, wondering why I had not tried it earlier. To my surprise, it mirrored my grandmother’s almost to a T; the flan came out perfect. Maybe I, or my mother, or my aunts, had never tried to recreate this dish for fear of not getting it right, for disappointment, for failure, but that didn’t stop my grandmother, who pushed through curdled, overcooked, failed flans, so why did I let it stop me? Most people cook to eat, so if the unknown jeopardizes a recipe, we can be reluctant to take it on, but as corny as it sounds, many fail to appreciate the process that comes with every recipe, and that the product of time in the kitchen shouldn’t determine its success 100 percent of the time. Regardless, this flan was an undoubted success.

I find flan unique because of its ability to be significantly sweet to the point where it lingers in your mouth without being overbearing. This is likely because the actual milky base of the flan isn’t as sweet as the caramelized sugar on top. The amount of glaze used on top of the flan can be adjusted if it’s decided to not be flipped while it’s in storage, so this dish can cater to a variety of tolerances for sweet food.

Though flan is typically identified as a Latin American dish, it was brought there by the Spanish before it started to spread across Latin countries. Flan could be traced even further back as well: all the way to the Roman Empire. Romans were among the first to use chickens for domestic purposes, which included harvesting their eggs, which nurtured the creation of many egg-based recipes, includ-



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• Academics
• Behavior
• Citizenship

It's time to try something different By Avery Byrne



Caitlin, a naive but well-meaning Enforcer and daughter of a Councilwoman, accompanies Vi on her mission to rescue her sister and to uncover the rotten corruption now taking over the Undercity. With this, Vi also has to grapple with the fact that there are good people from Piltover, a body that has done nothing but oppress her and her family, along with everyone else in the Undercity, for her entire life. Such a fact is made even more complicated with the romance blooming between them, one that refuses to hide in subtext.

For the past few meetings of the Bulldog’s Bark, Mr. Mazza and I have had a lot of talks about the originality in media recently, or the lack thereof. Among the sea of TV shows and movies that get released, many of which are reboots and sequels, it seems like an impossible task to find something that does something new—something that captivates you.

Let me recommend *Arcane*, a Netflix exclusive based on Riot Games’s *League of Legends*, which balances intricate character relations as well as complex power struggles that go back years and seep through every area of life. It also sports a loaded theme that it carries throughout its nine-episode run. What does it mean to lose your humanity? What motivates a person to do so? How far must someone go to prove that they can no longer be saved? I’m sure that many would be surprised to see that an animated series inspired by a mobile game tells stories of such depth, and it does it so well. I know that I was. I believe, though, that this show is exactly what we need. The beautiful animation accentuates the entire story, and the somewhat numerous cast of characters will always keep you engaged. It’s creative, highly compelling, and so different from the mindless reboots endlessly trying to plug up the vacuum of pop culture.

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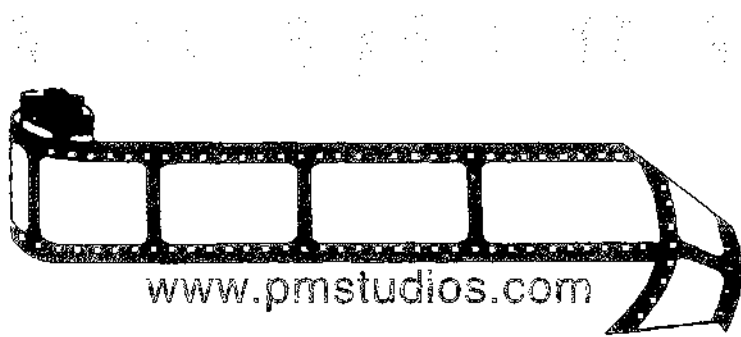
In *Arcane*’s world exists Piltover, the world’s center for invention, and the Undercity, the dregs of Piltover that lay ignored and oppressed by the Council, Piltover’s governing body, and the Enforcers, Piltover’s police force. Piltover, comprised of stunning whites and golds, awards its citizens comfortable lives filled with wonder, while the Undercity, filled with grimy grays, greens, and eventually artificial neons, threatens to squash any and all hope of those growing up there.

Among Undercity’s children are Vi and Powder, raised by Vander, a previous revolutionary. Vi harbors a dangerous tenacity to fight back, one that Vander tries to quell, reminding her that the risk of war involves her beloved younger sister’s life. Despite this, Vi leads Powder and her two adoptive brothers to a raid on a home in Piltover, a decision that sets the story into motion. From there, things escalate at a pace that Vi could never have predicted. After the concluding events of Part 1 separate Vi and Powder, changing their lives forever, Vi will be confronted with a startling question: When is someone too far gone?

Together, the pair works together to destroy down Silco’s iron grip on the Undercity. Silco, once a brother to Vander and someone who worked alongside him to fight for freedom, now will do anything to separate the Undercity from Piltover and rule over it all. Obsessed with power, he claims one of the most noteworthy quotes in the show, “Power, real power, doesn’t come to those who were born strongest, or fastest, or smartest. No. It comes to those who will do anything to achieve it.” He remains a sinister and looming threat throughout the entire show, but through his own character interactions that I wouldn’t dare spoil, he remains a person nonetheless.

The Undercity isn’t the only place made up of complex characters and struggles for power, however. Jayce Talis, an inventor of a lower house of Talis, skyrocketed to fame after unlocking the secrets of magic through science, science that the entire city depends on now. His mission, along with his partner Viktor, was to use their Hextech to improve the lives of those in the Undercity, where Viktor was from. However, Mel Medarda, a counselor with her own strong desire for power, ropes Jayce into the politics of being a counselor, distracting him from his original and righteous goal. As the audience, we watch him further and further distance himself from his goal and Viktor along with it. To keep his power, he will sacrifice parts of himself that he never could’ve imagined, as does Viktor. However, Viktor merely desires a stronger body and a legacy to leave behind. Manipulating Hextech to his will, Viktor sinks lower and lower, changing who he is forever. Starting out as bright young scientists and inventors looking to aid those in need, both gradually lose their humanity and their senses of self.

Arcane is a must-watch. Inside of the animated series lies a complicated and imaginative world filled with characters whose journeys all contribute in separate ways to the main theme of humanity. The stunning visuals, creative fight scenes, and captivating characters have left quite a lasting mark on me. It will shock you with its imagination, and compel you with the struggles of its story. If you’re looking for an exciting, exceptionally written, and thought-provoking series, this one is for you.



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How to celebrate 60 years of the Rolling Stones

By Katherine Meyer



For many, 2022 marks another year of COVID, quarantine, and virtual living. I can say for myself that rising COVID cases and this cold, dreary weather haven't provided an ideal entry into the new year. However, for any classic rock fans (or people ages 50+), 2022 carries a special degree of significance. After all, 2022

marks the 60-year anniversary since The Rolling Stones' founding in 1962. To celebrate such an auspicious occasion, I decided to listen to and review the band's top-selling album, which a quick Google search revealed to be 1971's *Sticky Fingers*.

Upon my first scan of the album's track list, I found myself surprised that I hadn't heard any of the songs listed. While I can't say I've often gone out of my way to listen to The Rolling Stones, songs like "Sympathy for the Devil" or "Beast of Burden" have been played on the radio enough that I nearly know them by heart. To not recognize any of the names on *Sticky Fingers* was both an oddity and, as I later realized, an absolute blessing. *Sticky Fingers* is the kind of album that you feel better after finishing. On most albums, there will be a few songs that are weaker than the rest, or a few songs that perhaps just don't appeal to you.

With *Sticky Fingers*, however, The Rolling Stones managed to put together ten songs that are both unique enough to avoid feeling repetitive and similar enough in style and sound to create a wonderful auditory synergy throughout the album. Paired together, this made for an album of songs I never wanted to skip over. My only complaint is how difficult this album is to write about; I've listened to it in full probably three or four times before writing this and am still floundering for a way to describe it because after each listen, my main takeaway was solely how much I enjoyed it.

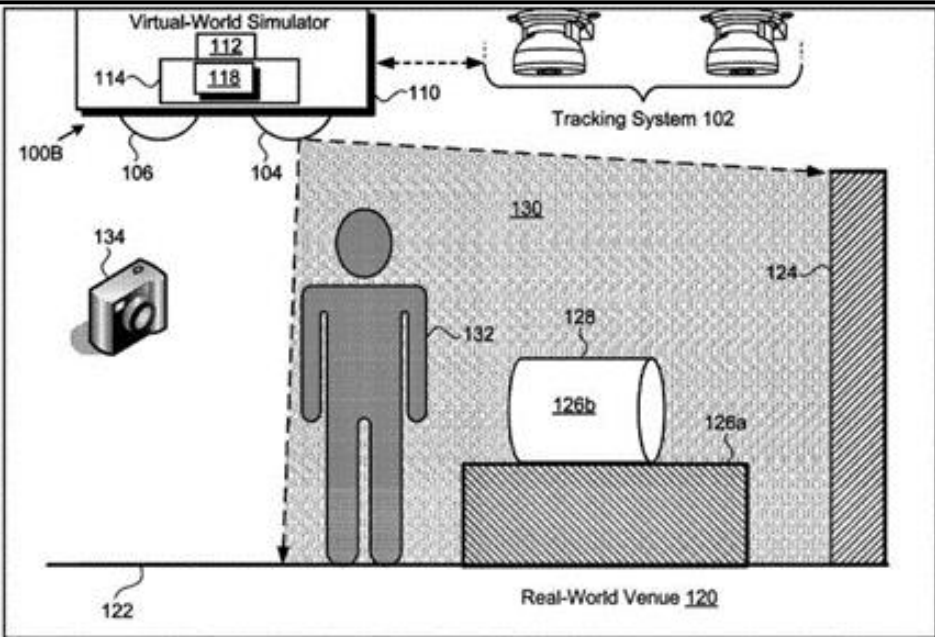
But after much pondering and consideration, I think I've figured it out: *Sticky Fingers* is an album that feels like summer, but not in the way you might think. Typically, we categorize "summer music" as party music, songs that are bright and vibrant and upbeat. To me, *Sticky Fingers* feels like a more modest summer album. Every song carries a powerful warmth that reminds me of late July heat. Songs like "Sway" and "Wild Horses" both remind me of warm, tired days spent lying on the porch, or going out for a barefoot walk when the pavement isn't too hot. "Brown Sugar" reminds me of the excited energy you'd find at a bustling downtown, and "Can't You Hear Me Knocking" is the kind of song that just begs to be played in the car with the windows down. (Side note on "Can't You Hear Me Knocking": the song's seven-minute runtime is mostly taken up by a four-minute long instrumental filled with brass and guitar solos, which only made me love the song even more as a lover of songs with excessive amounts of instrumental sections.)

As you get further into the album, a more nostalgic feeling becomes apparent, especially in songs like "I Got the Blues" and "Dead Flowers." Here the songs begin to become a bit mellower before building to the final song on *Sticky Fingers*, "Midnight Mile." This song is most likely one of my favorites on the album; it reminds me of mid-August, of draining heat and warm thunderstorms. The song's use of string instruments and piano is one of my favorite things about it, and they provide a welcome burst of power to the song's otherwise smooth and languid energy. If I had to recommend any song from *Sticky Fingers*, I would pick "Midnight Mile" for these reasons.

For anyone looking to start listening to The Rolling Stones for the year of their 60th anniversary, I would say *Sticky Fingers* is a great place to start. From beginning to end, the album's warmth and familiarity make it an easy listen that quickly becomes addicting. The amount of love and care that went into the album is evident as a display of what makes The Rolling Stones as great as they are, and as we leave this cold and dreary winter, I take comfort knowing that I'll have this album to keep me feeling warm.

Disney

By Ben Solasky
(Continued from page 2)



Who is to stop someone from using this new technology for something that is not with positive intent like Disney is using it? These holograms are supposed to be so realistic that you won't know if they are actually standing there in real life or not. I'd imagine militaries may adopt this technology to trick other forces into thinking there are signs of aggression against their country, which could lead to escalation along border lines. Or possibly, law enforcement may project themselves on every street block to intimidate passersby.

With this technology, it seems that anything is possible. Movies like *The Matrix* warned of simulated worlds in which the characters were unsure of whether anything around them was real or fake. The food you eat, the clothes you wear, the car you drive, and the people you live with may not even exist if technology like what this patent describes is adopted by many and developed to extremes.

Am I being unrealistic or paranoid in my concerns? I'm not so sure, but that's for you to decide.

Sources used in preparation for this article (including diagrams):

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Poetry and Photography

Flicker

By Nicole Bellows

In your dreams you’d always pretend
To be a knight in shining armor.
A fire burns in your heart,
The spirit of a warrior who never dies.

Colorful threads exploding with flavor,
The reds and golds illuminate
In a warm glow that fuels your determination.
You feel the fire of your passion in your dreams.

You easily talk someone down.
You easily fend off your enemies.
People clamor around you.
You never cry. You never embarrass yourself silly. You never fall flat
on your face.

Heroism would be easy in your dreams.

Heroism would be easy
If you didn’t feel a darkness
Twisting around your heart
And a speechlessness that closes your throat.

Heroism would be easy
If pressure wasn’t about to explode inside of you,
And a huge weight lay on your mind,
And the world felt too loud.

Loneliness encompasses you,
You crack and shatter at one tiny insult.
The world revolves around you but at the same time,
No one knows you at all.

Despite everything, there’s a spark.

A glint of fire in a bleak environment.
A sea of stars in the night sky,
Dotting the space,
Flickering as they die and afterwards reborn.

A spark that allows you to socialize.
A spark that allows you to cry without fear of judgment.
A spark that only grows stronger with every passing second.
A spark that lets you exist.

Heroism would be easy in our dreams, but living would not.

Cast a light into the dark,
Shout into the lonely silent depths of the void,
Cry and laugh and embarrass yourself and live.
The glorious dream lies perfectly tucked away.

Reality is a true struggle, but a worthy one.

“Dried Out” Amy Kleiner



Straw Dog

By Jasmine Shi

My mother was born in the sun
Her hair kissed and bleached by its rays,
Frayed by the parched horizon of the desert.
Her father was the sea, evaporated
And her mother was the dirt, brittle.

My mother was young, in the desert.
She crawled to the edge of the cracks,
Curled under the last apricot tree,
And broiled under its shade.

She was nursed so well she turned orange with the fruit.
She raised it near their ear to whisper *I’m sorry*
And let survival dribble down her chin

Hair had turned into hollow stocks of grain
Grain that mixed with the apricot juice
I wonder if you could depollute the marrow from my bloodstream
If the cells from colliding forces will conjoin or reject
And I will breathe.

Split your hair in two and weave me a new body
Let dexterity birth a soul
And let amber sap fuse my straw.

Mourning

By Erin Hart

Entombed within the flimsy coffin
are splinters of elusive memories,
acid and joyous alike:
those of childhood’s untimely end.

As earth entwines with flesh,
mortality is immortalized
in weeping eulogy verses
and rings of white lilies.

Mourners stagger from the procession
shrouded in black,
heads bowed to hallowed ground,
rueful eyes run dry.

Yet it is the highway shrines
of a long drive homeward
which twist the knife of woe
far beneath mangled skin.

White crosses and unlit candles
lie stranded in the roadside fields,
nameless
and condemned to oblivion.

Tires wail against asphalt,
a fitful cry of grief
drowned between steel walls--
nothing left behind.



“Shadows” Amy Kleiner