

# PARK LIFE

ARE THESE THE NEW ROARING 20s?





Photograph by Iona Wilson

Cover by Darcey West

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# STREET GO

Dear Readers,

*In light of the Corona Virus pandemic, which took the world by storm in March 2020, our lives have been irrevocably changed. Loved ones became faces on screens and school a distant memory, overshadowed by the struggles of online learning and the increasing mundanity of life indoors. However, through these periods of isolation and restriction, we were presented with a unique opportunity for reflection. Our ever-changing, propulsive society was suddenly brought to a halt and, perhaps for the first time in recent memory, urged to stay still.*

*As we pass the one-year mark since our country's last national lockdown, it is easy to forget the lessons learned and thoughts evoked throughout our time in isolation. Prime Minister Boris Johnson described the government's lifting of all Covid-19 restrictions as, 'a moment of pride,' and yet, as a community of young people were released into a world of uncertainty, this pride was perhaps drawn in part from our resilience during those unprecedented times.*

*Hence, this edition of Prior Park College's student magazine is profoundly reflective, not seeking to detach ourselves from the difficulties experienced, but to recognise the way in which it has shaped us. This year's themed edition of the Park Life magazine looks back to the 'roaring' 1920s and, more directly at the 2020s, nodding to the 'Lost Generation' through its exploration of young people's restlessness and simultaneous yearning for a place in this ever-changing world. Our student contributors were united by this theme, providing a dynamic yet contemplative response to the question; are these the new 'roaring 20s?'. Our 2022 edition follows the first online student magazine at Prior Park, acknowledging the imperative role of the digital world in enabling society to remain connected, while encouraging a continued sense of remembrance towards this collective experience. I hope that this edition will provide you with a similar feeling of reflection.*

Iona Wilson

*Thank you to all of the writers, artists and photographers.  
Park Life 2022 Team: Darcey West, Victoria Corfield and Iona Wilson.  
Credits to Kate Newbery and Dr McGowran.*

*Photograph by Darcey West*



# CAN IT REALLY BE THE NEW ROARING TWENTIES?

After the largely successful rollout of Covid-19 vaccines in the UK, many journalists and economists have been speculating that the UK may enter a time very similar to that of the 1920s. A time of great technological advancement, new social attitudes, and strong economic growth. This article looks at current economic growth and reflects on the true position of the UK.

The UK is a developed western country with the 5th largest nominal GDP (Gross Domestic Product) globally. According to the numbers, UK citizens should be some of the most well off and happy people in the world. However, on closer inspection, the figures show that the UK dropped to 18th happiest country in 2021 and fell to 21st position when it comes to average income (GDP per capita). This means that UK citizens earn less, on average, than those in the 20 higher ranked countries, with a growing number of households falling below the poverty line. Can we really call ourselves a developed country entering a new roaring twenties if a growing percentage of the population has to choose between feeding themselves and heating their homes? Is the UK entering a new golden age of technology and growth, or is the only thing

roaring the sound of the people at the bottom of the pile shouting out for more? The original roaring 20's was a period of social change, innovation and, famously, partying. However, the economic growth in that period, particularly in the UK, wasn't remarkable. The country struggled with strikes and high unemployment which made it more difficult to increase productivity and recover the economy after the Great War. The UK's average real GDP growth was 1.4% in the 1920s - in comparison, the UK economy grew by over 3% a year in the 50's and 60's. So, comparatively, the UK is in a much better economic place today with growth forecasts predicted to be +6.8% for 2021, an increase of 5.1% in 2022 and a 2.1% increase in 2023. Equally, the UK does not have the same struggles it previously had with unemployment, in fact, in the chancellor's recent budget (27th October 2021) he declared, "Employment is up, investment is growing..." so, it would appear that economically we are roaring. But why is there a feeling of discontent? There are, of course, other factors when deciding if a country is prosperous. Figures of growth and employment seem to be healthy and, when looking at the numbers provided by the Office for

National Statistics, nominal wages are growing. However, wage growth can be offset by inflation. Inflation is the general increase in prices in an economy, which means if general prices rise faster than increases in wages, employees can afford less in real terms. Wage growth statistics need to be adjusted for inflation to be relevant. Growth in average total pay, excluding bonuses, was 6.8% among employees for the three months May to July 2021. However, inflation (CPIH\* Consumer Price Index adjusted for Housing) averaged 2.2% over those three months, meaning real wage growth was still a healthy 4.6%. Whilst this figure seems good it could be argued that it is simply making up for previous years where inflation was higher than wage growth. The Bank of England has also stated that, "Pay growth has been artificially boosted by Covid-related factors in the labour market. We estimate that underlying annual wage growth is lower than the headline data suggests but will strengthen as the economy recovers from the pandemic." So, real wage increases may be much lower than expected, despite it still being an increase.

However, facts and figures do not necessarily

show other qualitative factors in people's lives. The divide between rich and poor is becoming more prevalent than ever, with the number of millionaires in the UK increasing 55% from 2012 to 2019 according to statista.com. This is sadly contrasted with a 449% increase in the number of people receiving three days' worth of emergency food from a foodbank. It is strange to see statistics about how well the economy is recovering and yet still hear of people struggling to afford the essentials. Policy makers should not forget about people below these averages and figures must not be used as an excuse to do nothing. The UK still has most of the decade left to fix some of its problems, giving it the potential to become a time in history that future generations will look back upon as a golden age.

To conclude, can it really be the 'new' roaring twenties? At the moment, it seems, the **roar** of success at the top is much louder than the **cry** of frustration at the bottom.

Caspar Berridge



Photograph by Iona Wilson

# Neoclassicism to Surrealism:

## How did Picasso's changing styles affect his expression of political unrest?

Towards the end of the Second World War, Pablo Picasso was asked to justify the relationship between art and politics. He retorted, "What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who only has eyes if he's a painter, ears if he's a musician, or a lyre in every chamber of his heart if he's a poet – or even, if he's a boxer, only some muscles?" His response was partly a defence of the direction his art had taken from the 1920s onwards, something that is marked by the significant shifts in style during this period.

Perhaps it would be logical to think that Picasso's more classical work might have been created in advance of his revolutionary cubist style. Surprisingly, it is quite the opposite. It is important to note the transition of his works throughout the 1920s and to what extent these shifts were responsible for the artist's most renowned political artworks, above all, *Guernica* (1937).

During the years following the misery and turbulence of World War I, Picasso began producing work in a neoclassical style, although he retained elements of cubism in his later work. This style reflected a change in Picasso and catalysed the beginnings of some of his most famous work. He first visited Italy during 1917 and this had a significant impact on his creative output. During this time, Picasso saw many great classical works of art including antique sculptures in the Vatican as well as Roman paintings and mosaics in Naples, Pompeii and Herculaneum. He also saw a good deal of Renaissance art in Florence and Rome including work by Michelangelo and Raphael. Picasso was a bohemian, who was fond of engaging with a diversity of styles and,

influences; the work that he admired greatly influenced his decision to take a dramatic shift in styles from cubism to neoclassicism.

As much as his engagement with a wide range of diverse artistic influences contributed to his shift in styles, his marriage to the Russian ballet dancer, Olga Khokhlova, is considered an important factor in initiating Picasso's 'return to order.' His exposure to Olga's sophisticated social circles and his adoption of a more conventional style at home was reflected in changes to his work. Olga and Picasso were very different personalities and under her influence Picasso viewed himself differently, a more orthodox artist rather than provocative. His return to figurative painting can be seen in works such as 'Woman Reading,' 'Two Women Running on the Beach' and 'The Pan Flute.' He began producing statuesque, proportioned figures of peasants, dancers and harlequins, adapting his experimental style of earlier, which appeared fragmented and abstract. It seems there is no style that Picasso was not a true master of. Jonathan Jones writes, "Picasso could do everything, and when he turns to classical perfection in the 20s, it is simply because he can. His neoclassical works are a kind of holiday from modernism."

One of these classical pieces, initially conceived as a self-portrait, *Harlequin with a Mirror*, combines elements from the world of circus and from the *Commedia dell'arte*, which Picasso held a fascination for. Tomàs Llorens recently disclosed, "the face that was initially a self-portrait of the painter takes on the impersonality of the mask in the final appearance of the work." We can interpret this

as Picasso viewing himself in a similar manner to Harlequin as what began a self-portrait became a mask of Pierrot, gazing into a mirror.

During the 1920s Picasso began engaging with the writings of Sigmund Freud, another distinctive individual who captivated his mind. Freud's writing had a significant influence on the Surrealist movement through his writings on the interpretation of dreams. The Surrealists waged a revolution against the constraints of the rational mind and during this period, artists used drawing or writing to unlock ideas and images from their unconscious minds. Others wanted to depict dream worlds or hidden psychological tensions.

Picasso himself began to move towards this surrealist style of art. For Picasso, the conception of painting began to serve as an expression of his unconscious mind like a dream. This work was often characterised by an unusual portrayal of figures with disorganized and chaotic facial features and twisted bodies, bright colours and a distorted sense of perspective. Following his neoclassical pause from unusual and provocative art, his involvement with surrealism prompted a return to a more unorthodox style that was expressed in his early cubist works.

This fractured and more abstract style can be recognized across some of Picasso's most famous work, most importantly '*Guernica*.' Painted in 1937 to represent the tragic horrors of the Spanish Civil War, this piece was something of an expression of emotional, physical and political suffering that became widely identified by society. Throughout Picasso's early life he showed little interest in politics, however this changed. Despite still living in France in the 1930s, Picasso was deeply distraught by the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War and he painted *Guernica* in response to the devastating bombing of the town. The bloody civil war, fought by the Spanish republicans and overthrown by General Francisco Franco, caused upheaval in not only politics but also art. Picasso demonstrated his alliance with the republicans through *Guernica*, retelling the horrors of war. It consists of monochrome tones, mainly of varying shades of grey to successfully depict the depression at the time and denounce the war as something that may be seen as triumphant to some. Across the painting, we see the symbolism of cruel Spanish traditions, imagery of a mother cradling her child's corpse with her head tilted towards the face of a bull.

Perhaps Picasso uses this to capture other violent aspects of Spanish society (for example, bull fighting) as well as war. The neoclassical elements of the painting can be seen through the hidden harlequins. Picasso used these harlequins because of their association with the supernatural, supposedly they overcome the force of death depicted. The surrealist images in this piece contribute to the harrowing and thought-provoking effect. Militaristic imagery is prominent throughout and in the centre is a dying horse shown in agony, pierced by a spear, which could be a further reference to the mistreatment of animals. The painting appears to include brutal images of women. At the time of Franco's reign after the war, he introduced laws against women that meant they were treated as inferior to men. Women were obliged to follow "la guía de la buena esposa" (1953,) which required them to follow a certain set of rules to retain a commendable reputation and serve their husbands in the way Franco perceived as right. The brutalised representation of women in *Guernica* could perhaps indicate a foretelling of Franco's repressive treatment of women and corrupt leadership. Representation of women in *Guernica* could perhaps indicate a foretelling of Franco's repressive treatment of women and corrupt leadership..

Picasso chose to express his political views and the many faces of his personality through his painting. He confronted the historical events of his time through his art and threw himself into the fight against fascism, remaining a member of the communist party until his death in 1973. Through *Guernica* we see that Picasso's changing styles were of fundamental importance to this powerful expression of political unrest. This impactful piece of political art combined elements of cubism, surrealism and neoclassicism. Changing and merging styles created the foundation by which Picasso built his name, artistic genius and political activist. Throughout his life, Picasso's creative energy never faltered, and he engaged with an extraordinarily wide range of ideologies and styles, but it is those of the 20s that generated his captivating masterpiece, leaving an artistic legacy that continues to resonate today.

Thea Sprawson



**Art** of the 1920s was very much the reflection of post war trauma resulting in a faltering of morality. Giving rise to the emergence of numerous art movements including art deco, cubism, and Dada. The innovations that occurred at this time are still influential today, modern art and contemporary art production owe so much to the 1920s.

Experimental is the best word to describe the artistic trends in the 1920s. Major authors challenged the normal and traditional way of thinking, writer F. Scott Fitzgerald famously described the period as the 'Jazz Age'. This was also often referred to as the 'Golden Age' in Europe, where themes concerning sexuality, technology and social progress were prominent. Artists also aimed to produce something innovative and dynamic especially since photography was recognised as an official art form. Which led to the question of what art was? And what was its purpose?

In response to changes in society and culture the artworld digressed from the elaborate style associated with the Victorian era and swiftly replaced it with the flourish of art deco. Paintings centred around nature and abstraction thrived, epitomised in Georgia O'Keeffe's painterly experiments which went hand-in-hand with the broadening of sculptural production. The revolutionary three-dimensional production of art is wedded to the Dada movement and the ideas of Marcel Duchamp. Dadaism has been praised for its influence and importance for contemporary art today. Originating in Zurich during WW1 it soon became an international phenomenon, Marcel Duchamp was essential in bringing forward new ideas of readymade art and the concept of praising the idea above the subject. Dadaism questioned the purpose of art as well as drawing attention to found objects and recycled materials.

Recently I have become interested in Cornelia Parker and her use of lost and found objects to create compelling installations inspired by Duchamp. Her comments on the role of art in society are also deeply fascinating, she simply states that art has a political function because it appears to have no function. She continues to expand by saying that

art thrives in places where people are free. Cultural and creative activity is about freedom. Creating art seems to be as urgent activity as anything else, and after a time of repressing civil rights the art of the 2020s is set to be just as thrilling as the 1920s.

In my opinion the post-war artists were having to deal with a new reality of a world that was in the process of healing, they didn't quite know where it was heading. Artists were responding to the disaster and tragedy of the war, but simultaneously attempting to make something of the changes and the opportunities that it provided. Today as we enter the 2020s having experienced the trauma and utter disbelief caused by the corona virus pandemic, if anything we can expect the 2020s to be just as turbulent yet inspiring for the next generation of artists.

Unlike the 1920s where art was reserved for the upper class or the gifted. Art materials are more accessible for people so infinitely more art is being produced and shared more widely than ever before especially with artists utilising public installations to share their work. Just like at the end of WW1 when art opened up a new world, having been locked down in our own homes the power of social media is set to become the next catalyst for artistic change, we stand

on the verge of yet another great explosion -  
**the art world is poised to change yet again.**

Louise Cattanach



Art by Louise Cattanach

**"art thrives in places where people are free"**

**FOUND & LOST**

# It's a small world

Social media, the internet, plane travel, music streaming, mobile phones – these are all things we take for granted nowadays, but it is important to remember that only a few decades ago most of these things did not exist at all or were in their very early stages. Over the last century, there have been massive leaps in technology that have allowed us to become more connected

to one another than ever before. This new level of connectivity can be seen both in the form of telecommunication and transportation.

Humans have always been very social creatures, and since the dawn of our existence we have worked on ways to improve how we communicate thoughts and ideas with one

another, and devices we can use to do so. We humans have invented language, writing, numbers, books, scrolls, paper, telegrams and so much more to convey our thoughts and ideas effectively, but over the last century, the development of communication techniques has developed at a pace never before seen.

The invention of the first telephone is widely accredited to Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Watson in 1875, however, at that point it was a primitive device which only worked over a very short range. In the following decades, it developed to have a rotary dial, and then to have buttons,

and then to not even have to be wired in the form of a cellular phone in 1984 and has developed further to smartphones, which now play a core part in our lives, allowing us to communicate and access content no matter where we are.

In 1971, the first email was sent. This revolutionary way of messaging was ground-breaking and has since become one of the most common methods of communication. In fact, it is estimated that 2.4 billion emails are sent every second. Not only did the invention of the email make communicating more convenient, but it also made it much faster, as an email could be sent



Photograph by Ellie Stringer

nearly instantaneously, whilst a paper letter could take days to arrive, potentially weeks if you are sending a letter across the globe and it reduces the amount of paper needed, which helps both in the logistical and environmental aspects of the business. Whilst fax was a great invention, email undoubtedly wins in terms of its impact on society and how we communicate.

Another mode of communication is texting, which can find its roots in telegraph and telegram systems but has only really developed to what we know today in the last 30 years. In 1992, the first ever text message was sent to a cell phone by Neil Papworth, a development and test engineer for Sema Group Telecoms, who were developing a system for their customer, Vodafone. Then in 1993, Nokia released the first cell phone that was capable of sending and receiving text messages, the Nokia 2110. However, the internet and the world wide web has allowed other apps like Facebook Messenger, iMessage and WhatsApp which don't utilise SMS to catch up and overtake SMS messaging systems, due to the limitation of SMS in terms of character limits which is why online slang terms like LOL, BRB and LMK were developed, to minimise the number of characters being used.

Of course, the greatest development in communications, and undoubtedly one of humanity's greatest inventions, is the internet and the World Wide Web - the latter invented by Tim Berners-Lee. The internet has allowed for the development of countless further methods of communication and allows us to connect to one another much more easily. Social media is a prime example of this, allowing us to post our thoughts and ideas to be shared to others, and to also access others' thoughts and ideas. These platforms have exploded in popularity over the last couple of decades, with Facebook having 1.58 billion monthly active users in 2019, and other platforms like YouTube, Instagram and Snapchat having similar figures.

The internet has also allowed for the development of new ways of consuming content which others have created, both educational and entertainment. One of the best examples of this is YouTube, a platform founded in 2005, which now has over 2 billion monthly active users. As a matter of fact, on YouTube, 1 billion hours of videos are watched every single day - that is

over a hundred millennia in consecutive watch time in the span of one day. With websites like Wikipedia, the way we consume and gather information has changed as well, with billions of pages of information that can be accessed for free and very easily through simple search queries, instead of having to comb through hundreds of books to find the information you need.

All of these technologies have completely changed how we communicate with one another on a personal level, but they have also completely changed the world of business in terms of how individuals communicate with businesses, as well as how businesses operate. For example, online shopping has rapidly increased in popularity, and now some of the biggest businesses are online merchants, like Amazon. Being online makes it much easier for businesses to access a great deal of additional customers that would never have been accessible before, and as such they can globalise and grow much more swiftly and don't need to have hundreds of brick-and-mortar stores to do so. In conjunction with the development of air travel and transportation, goods and individuals can be transported swiftly and affordably to anywhere around the globe in most cases under a day, instead of in months like older forms of transportation would have done.

Telecommunications and connectivity have changed drastically over the last century, and it is likely the recent COVID-19 pandemic has deeply embedded these new methods of communication into the fabric of our society. Platforms like Microsoft Teams, Zoom and other online meeting applications have exploded in popularity due to the pandemic, and it does not look like they are going anywhere anytime soon, which shows how the pandemic has further changed how we communicate with one another both personally and professionally. It seems every few years a new device or form of communication arises, with major strides being made in the worlds of virtual reality, augmented reality, and wearable devices, with work like Google Glass and Facebook's virtual reality remote meeting rooms already in the works. It will truly be interesting to see how telecommunications develop in the next few decades and beyond.

Thomas Roblin

**2.4  
billion emails  
are sent every  
second.**

## The Cultural 'Civil War' of the 1920s

The 'Roaring Twenties' is a time identified by large-scale social change and economic prosperity. The First World War had ended with victory for the Allies and so returned peace. Men came home from war whilst factories and oil companies were striking it rich. This new boom in the economy had an immense impact on society.

A prime example of how the twenties were a time of social transformation is through the symbol of the 'New' Woman. A familiar image of the 1920s is of a flapper. A young woman with bobbed hair, breaking the stereotypical norms by drinking, smoking and being more sexually 'free' than previous generations. In fact, though many did adopt a fashionable flapper style, most women in the 1920s did none of these things.

During World War One, over 890,000 women had to take the place of men in factories. They worked long days doing physically demanding tasks, contributing to the war effort by producing weaponry for the soldiers and becoming nurses, for example.

This changed the position of women in society. Even after the war, millions of women worked in blue collar jobs, as well as white-collar jobs and could now afford to participate in the expanding consumer economy.

Women were also granted more domestic freedoms. For example, the increased availability of birth control devices, such as the diaphragm, made it possible for women to have fewer children. Moreover, new technology and machinery like the electric washing machine and the portable vacuum cleaner eliminated some of the toiling of household work, meaning women didn't need to be at home so much.

The Great Migration of African Americans from the Southern countryside to Northern cities is another example of social change in the 1920s. The African Americans wanted to escape racism and segregation, for example the Jim Crow laws, for higher paying job opportunities in factories rather than sharecropping. The black population in the Northern states nearly doubled from 11% in 1910 to 20% in 1930. However, social unrest arose as an unintended consequence. Owing to this migration, the

increasing distinctiveness of Black culture, for instance jazz and blues music, and the movement known today as the Harlem Renaissance (known as the "New Negro Movement" at the time) unsettled some white Americans.

In 1921 Congress passed the Emergency Quota Act which limited the number of immigrants to approximately 350,000 per year in response to immigrants leaving Europe after World War One. Some Americans were concerned that immigrants were destroying "American" culture and taking their jobs.

Later in 1924, the National Origins Act replaced the Emergency Quota Act which established stricter national quotas such as Asians and southern and eastern Europeans were subject to fierce discrimination due to the fear of communists and spies infiltrating the United States.

This harsh discrimination led to millions of people across the country, joining the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the 1920s. Membership of the KKK grew rapidly. In 1922 there were 100,000 members which increased to 4,000,000 by 1924.

The KKK represented a return to all the traditional values that the 'Roaring Twenties' were destroying. More specifically, the twenties represented political uplift for African Americans that threatened the social hierarchy of the Jim Crow oppression. The Jim Crow Laws were a series of state and local statutes, starting in 1857 up until 1964 when the Civil Rights Act came into place, that legalized racial segregation and denied equal opportunity to black citizens. The tension caused by the racial segregation led to mass lynching's across the country and fear of the opposite race from both white and black Americans.

There were also major cultural changes in the entertainment industry. Jazz music originated in the southern states of America, from the blues music of black Americans. It became popular due to its rhythmic and lively tempo, its connections to speakeasies (bars that sold alcohol illegally during the Prohibition years) and new radio technology. The growth in this new music led to a slight increase of the status of women and black people.

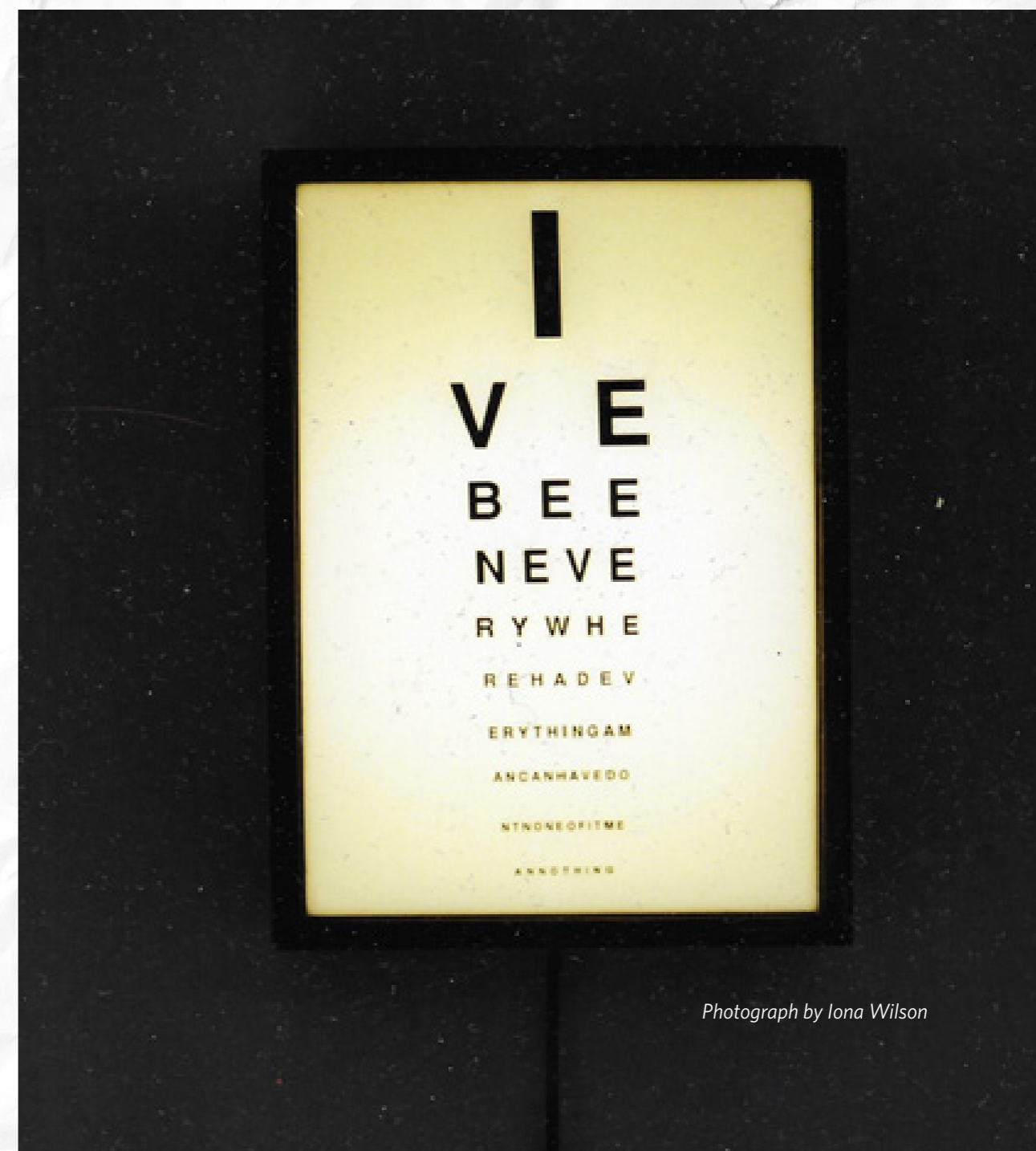
However, like many of the social changes in the 1920s, it was younger people who liked the new music, and it was older and religious people who rejected it. Jazz music was prohibited in several cities, such as New York and Detroit so performances therefore moved to speakeasies. Older people saw jazz as a corrupting influence because of its links with immoral activities such as alcohol, suggestive dances and smoking. Racists didn't like it because of its black American origins, and it was leading to the different races mixing.

The Jazz Age also helped inspire a new generation of dance. Young people rejected the formal dances of their parents, for instance the waltz. They preferred more **bold** and **energetic**

dances, which often included improvised steps. Dances like the Charleston and the Lindy Hop became fashionable. But parents were shocked by many of these new dances which they thought were sexually suggestive.

The 'Roaring Twenties' was a very controversial decade where society completely transformed into a more modern and liberal civilization. Although not everyone was pleased with the changes, most people believed society was changing for the better. Perhaps without these key changes that took place in the twenties, today's society would look very different.

Abi Jones



Photograph by Iona Wilson



# THE NEW

Disrupting the automobile industry, the growth of electric vehicles has been remarkable. These sleek and silent cars are becoming increasingly commonplace on roads around the world and with the announcement of plans to phase out the use of petrol or diesel, the interest in electric vehicles has never been greater.

With higher sales year-on-year, it is important to understand how the electric vehicle has evolved, how and why this has altered the perception of electric power, and to what extent this impact will enact change.

The history of the electric car has much older roots than many expect. During the late 1800s, the primary mode of transport was the tried-and-tested horse and carriage. However, it didn't come without issues; put plainly, the use of horse-drawn carriages caused great disruption through waste, manure, and disease. Given the lack of road maintenance and cleaning in the late 19th Century, one can easily imagine the cesspools the streets would become with each heavy rainfall. This flawed system was indispensable yet becoming unsustainable.

With the issues arising from the use of horse-drawn carriages, the exploration for alternate methods of transport led to the development of the "horseless carriage", or automobile. Alongside the invention, development, and production of the internal combustion engine, other systems were investigated, including the use of electric batteries and motors.

Demand for electric vehicles began to gather momentum in the 1890s. Electric power was providing a quieter, easier mode of transport compared with the traditional petrol-powered engines, which were

physically demanding to start-up and drive, noisy, and produced soot and strong fumes.

Because of these benefits, the popularity of electric automobiles grew and by 1900 1/3 of cars on US roads were electric. But they possessed a major downside and a problem still deterring many today - they lacked range.

However, the significance of this was not a great concern, due to there being little demand for long distance travelling at that time.

These new "horseless carriages" were the beginnings of a modal shift in transportation. They arose as a saving grace from the previous physical pollution and stench, but the emerging technology brought with it its own set of unique problems - the severity of which would lie undetected for decades to come.

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Electric, petrol, and steam vehicles had made a serious impact on transportation by the turn of the 20th century and were still fighting for dominance within the automotive industry; the electric vehicle continued to face range and efficiency setbacks while innovation led to the improvement in performance of the internal combustion engine.

With progress, such as the mass production of Ford's Model T, the price and performance gap continued to grow between battery and petrol power, paving the way for the dominance of the latter that was to come.

The growing popularity of petrol-powered cars meant that progress in the development of electric vehicle technology stalled. Lacking the ability of long distances, the electric car was quite literally left behind and investment in electric technology stagnated.

Initially, the more reliable, less complicated, and quieter drive of the electric car provided a 'classier' alternative to petrol power. However, advertising in the early 1900s promoting the simpler electric model were directed towards women. Focusing upon this automotive 'minority' group resulted

# ELECTRIC

in a greater majority of drivers believing that the complexity of petrol power was a sacrifice worth paying for the extra freedom of long-range and performance. This initial belief regarding the restrictions of electric power, distracted from the great potential of the early electric models and by the 1920s, the electric vehicle market had all but disappeared; electric power in vehicles had become a long-lost technology and one which would lie dormant for decades to come.

After half a century, having well and truly lost the race for industry dominance to the powerful internal combustion engines, the initially promising electric technology was now all but a distant memory.

It was only when concerns surrounding two issues - oil-dependency and the environment - started to emerge that a new interest for electric powered vehicles was taken up in the US.

During the 60s and 70s, the need for cleaner transport was apparent, pollution and smog was smothering cities. Combine this with the geopolitical issue of the Oil Embargo of 1973, the need for fuel and energy diversification was evident.

These two concerns caused an international drive to develop electric cars and battery technology, providing newly found research projects with deep pockets and a great sense of urgency. Although it was not the entire solution, this led to a new era in battery technology development - the rechargeable lithium-ion battery.

Some ground was made during this time, but with the stabilisation of the oil crisis many projects were discarded and the need for change for was 'forgotten' by many. However, a committed few had now got a taste of "going electric" and the belief in the need for technological development in that field began to return.

Only recently has the great potential of electric vehicles truly been showcased. Society's growing environmental conscience, has brought

a new demand for electric vehicles, providing an opportunity for electric power to re-enter the automotive market. The biggest disruption to the industry came in 2006, with a promise made by a now all-too-common name - Elon Musk; the promise of an electric sports car, which would have performance unparalleled by any electric vehicle yet produced. Utilising lithium-ion batteries, the Tesla Roadster was like nothing seen on the market before; this elite, luxury sportscar boasted an unprecedented 200-mile range between charges.

Musk entered the industry wanting to "prove that people didn't need to compromise to drive electric - that electric vehicles can be better, quicker and more fun to drive than gasoline cars." This reimagining of "going electric" would help to change the public's negative beliefs; his vehicles were to become a proof of social, environmental, and economic status.

The success of this market-changing vehicle, and further improvement of subsequent models challenged the out-dated, negative perceptions of electric vehicles. Tesla has not only removed the great compromise regarding distance, but has furthered this, showing that going electric vehicles could be lavish, more powerful, and more immersive.

However, their incredible success is not solely down to the technology of the products, but due to their innovative customer experience. Tesla produces a pioneering driving experience through personalisation to the preferences of the individual customer; through online seamless adjustment to driver profiles, Tesla's data-heavy approach enables a strong understanding of its customers both as a whole and on an individual level. The ability to make the customer feel so unique produced an exceptional driving experience that has driven the demand for Tesla's products.

In addition, Tesla's holistic approach furthers their personal relationship with customers;

from manufacturing components, through maintenance, and to the selling of the vehicles, Tesla exclusively controls all interactions that customers have with their vehicles. Whilst this was an unusual way of operating as a car company, and indeed may be seen as a 'selfish' strategy, this method of interaction has built an almost intimate connection between vendor and customer, generating a remarkable sense of brand loyalty.

While a clean, comfortable, and silent ride are now characteristic with electric vehicles across the industry, Tesla's focus on personalization has created a unique experience unmatched by other automakers and has transformed user expectations. With such a stand-out service for customers, there is no surprise that Tesla has become the fastest growing company in the world.

In parallel, the current re-introduction of electric vehicles to the wider public eye has been a relatively swift process. This quick growth of availability has created a sense of intelligence generated by the feeling that the current public are at the forefront of a novel technology. The fear of missing out on this brand-new, personal experience continues to pull consumers to join in the purchase of increasingly more widely available electric vehicles.

Although the need for the decarbonisation of transport has returned a focus to the electric car, the automotive vehicle industry has been able to break down the perception of the compromise between carbon footprint and performance, thus making these alternatives more appealing. This gap will only continue to be further diminished with the inevitable improvement of charging infrastructure and range.

As with a century ago, electric power is seemingly a 'cleaner' alternative to its polluting predecessor. Whilst this seems to display the power of innovation in times of need and provide consolation in the face of the current environmental challenges, the truth of the matter is that the quick-fixes of today could have far reaching second-order consequences for tomorrow. Concerns are already being voiced about the environmental and geopolitical impact of sourcing materials for batteries and electric components, raising the question of what will the future hold for this technology?

For growth and support to continue, electric vehicles will rely heavily on innovative customer experiences being present across the sector. Although this market is set to soar, careful systems and restrictions need to be in place as to permit this growth while still providing a sustainable and enduring successor to the internal combustion engine.

James Streets



Photograph by Oscar Talbot

# IT'S TIME

The importance of young people in politics has never been so clear: there's no doubt that we live in a time of change, global warming, racial discrimination, sexism, all issues periodically overlooked or side-lined are now common topics and encouraged to be talked about. The majority of these social reforms are being orchestrated by young people all around the world demonstrating their importance in change. Whilst people can still make this change outside of positions of power **it is when the right people with the right mindset are in power that we can make the world a better place for everyone.**

Politically speaking, the world lacks young people's voices. The average age of MP's is 53, and only 1.65% of politicians around the world are in their 20s with 11.87% in their 30s. This means that young people are severely underrepresented. The importance of age in politics lies within the huge difference between the times we live in now and the times that most politicians lived through 20 or more years ago: it can be harder for older politicians to adjust, too much change has happened in these recent years for us to continue to ignore young people's role in our future, after all it is our future we

will be living in, **so why not let us shape it?**

It has been proven time and time again that our inability to act quickly has a big impact on the world. Take climate change, for example, whilst scientifically recognised as an issue as early as the 50s was not a big agenda for governments until the early 2000's, it took 50 years for national parliaments to properly start considering the effect it may have on our future. During those 50 years not all movement for change was even in the right direction: in 2001 America and Russia pulled out of the Kyoto protocol, a climate change agreement which required 37 industrialised nations to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Without America and Russia in the agreement it was essentially reduced to a symbolic agreement between nations.

Had we listened and acted when we had the chance, the future of this planet would look a lot brighter than it does currently. One of the solutions to issues such as climate change is almost always faster change, fresher ideas, ideas that align with what is best for the present and future not just the former. It is a quality a lot of young people possess because of the society we have been raised in. Seeing all of the advancements made and the difference between now and 40 years ago does have an effect on us; it makes us want to strive for a better, fairer future. At the core of this is politics; widescale change depends on it, policies must be passed, and agreements must be made and with the implementation of young people and our ideas change will be faster and more reactive to the problems that need solving. To put it another way, we were born in the present, most politicians are born in the past. It only makes sense that we decide or at least have a bigger say in our future because we are, after all, the ones that will live through it.

However, how we achieve this is another matter: in a third of countries around the world eligibility for national parliament starts at 25. Lowering this to something like 20 would be huge as those five to seven years missed out could be spent rising to a rank where you can make a change, the main issue is the time it takes to be a politician in a position to make change; general elections are held every five years, if you try to become an MP at the wrong time you miss a window and may have to wait a long time to have a chance. This reality, and the remoteness of the political classes are, it seems to me, a reason that there is not enough engagement amongst young people in politics right now.

Dylan Craft

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS

The roaring 20s was a period of evolution and development for the film industry.

It was the 1920s that brought cinema out of the shadows and into the limelight.

It was in 1927 that the first film with sound was released. The 1920s had the highest output of films in the US, reaching up to 800 films per annum; in today's standards it is remarkable for there to be over 500.

The expansion of Hollywood was taking place at that time as it was reaching new countries and audiences. Just as it is today, Hollywood is at the centre of the film industry. The increase in film demand led to the emergence of the Big Five film studios who arguably first struck gold in the 1920s to 1930s: Warner Bros Pictures, Paramount, Metro Pictures Corporation-which would later merge with other companies to form Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer in 1924-would evolve throughout the 20th century and launch cinema into a new perspective for the people.

In the 1920s, it was silent films that were the prominent product of the film industry. Whereas text is considered God in today's film industry, it was often only used for exposition. It was physicality that mainly captured the audience's attention; an actor's movement, their facial expressions, status...

Special effects are considered an essential aspect of film today, but we are spoiled for choice in comparison to the 1920s. Our visual effects range from animations to computer-generated imagery which are accessible to most people in the film industry. Still photography was one of the few recognised examples of visual effects in the 1920s. However, prosthetic makeup had first been used in 1902 in a French film "Le Voyage dans la Lune". Since then, it had been altered and developed so that by the time the 1920s were



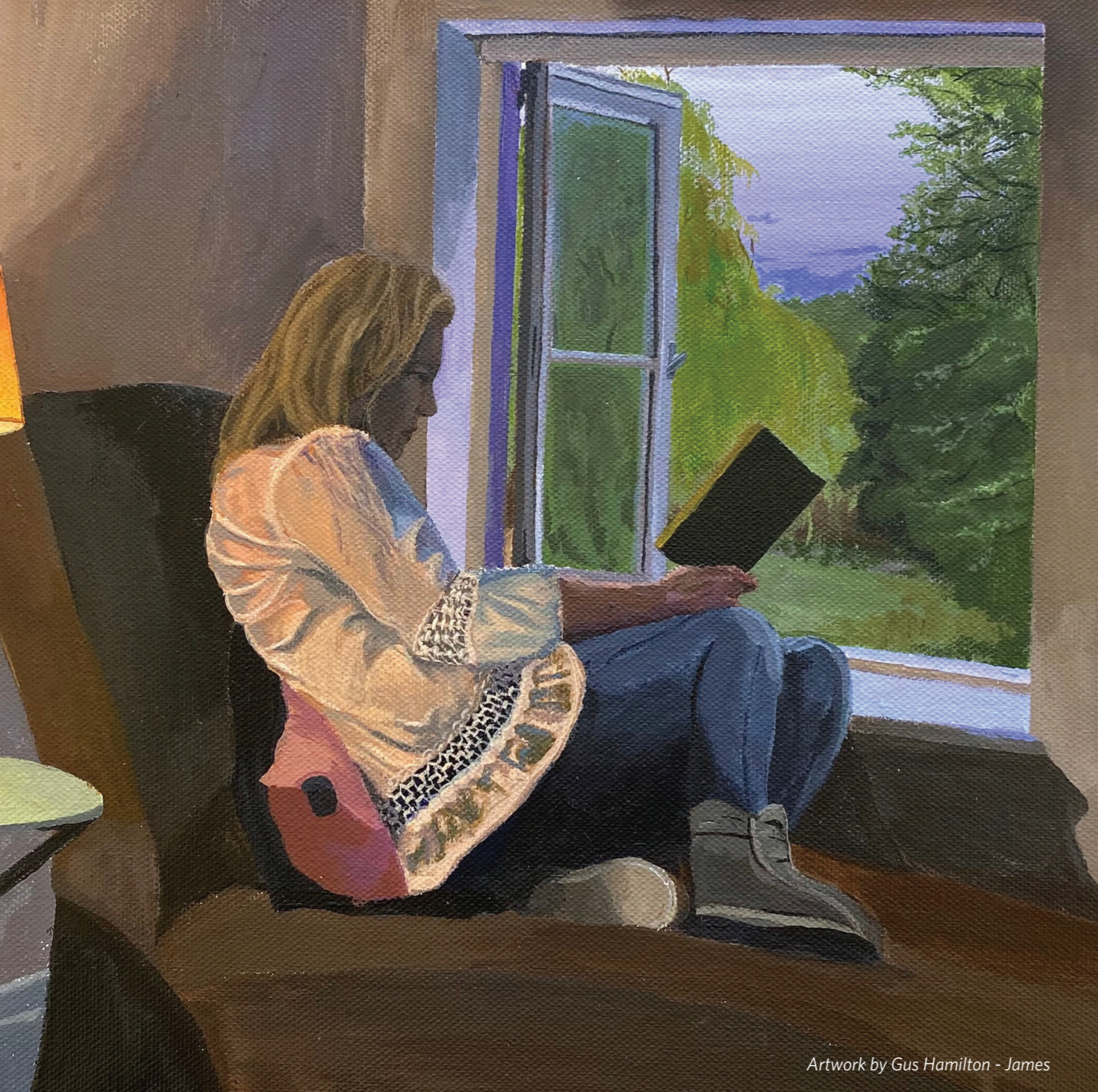
Photograph by Iona Wilson

after it was perceived as an incredible use of special effects.

One of the critical conditions that allowed the film industry to grow, particularly in Europe, was the War. World War I was in many ways, responsible for the birth of cinema. It was responsible for radically evolving many acclaimed film movements such as German expressionism, Soviet montage, and French impressionist cinema. German expressionism for example, had a huge success in cinemas with films like Nosferatu and the Cabinet of Dr Caligari, which were both horrors. These early European ideas had an impact on Hollywood's way of "making monsters". Frankenstein was originally shot in 1931 and was applauded for its exceptional use of German expressionism when shooting the film.

The 1920s were not as prosperous for the people of Russia. In 1917, the Russian monarchy was overthrown leading to the instalment of the Bolsheviks in their government. The Bolsheviks were quick to censor all forms of entertainment and as a result the Russian film industry deteriorated rapidly. But rather than sit by idly, the productive film experts of Russia began researching and studying film across the globe. Lev Kuleshov invented Soviet montage in 1918 and continued developing it during the reign of the Bolsheviks. It was an amazing breakthrough in film that has influenced practically every montage in cinema since. As mentioned, Hollywood was thriving at that time and many of their films were screened in Russian theatres. It did not take long for the people of Russia to acknowledge that these American films had a far greater impact than the censored Soviet productions. Although the American government and way of life was so different from the Soviet's, many could not stop from praising these new films. It was said that the Soviet reaction to the Hollywood influence was a mix of repulsion and admiration.

Oscar Hubbard



Artwork by Gus Hamilton - James

# 'Zooming' through the Pandemic

by Sophia Thorpe

The Coronavirus has been an unprecedented pandemic in part due to the impact of social media. News now spreads around the world at the click of a button, and social media has vastly influenced societies' coping strategies throughout the tiresome lockdown.

The 1918 pandemic was nicknamed the 'Spanish Flu'; however the earliest documented case was from Kansas in the United States and not Spain. Our interconnected world enabled us to understand more about the geographical origins of the disease that caused our 2019 pandemic-though it certainly didn't spare us misinformation - and social media also meant that the whole world almost instantly knew even the most minute details of the virus, through our social media. Instagram and Facebook posts went up, YouTube videos were uploaded, every news website and newspaper in the world published the information and much of humanity was texting, snapchatting, Whatsapping. Without social media we would have certainly have been less informed; we would also have been less connected, and less distracted from the sombre news that rolled out every day.

In the UK, even the government began using social media to inform people on how they should respond to Lockdown. Government ads were popping up everywhere, reminding us to stay at home and stay safe. This strategy was incredibly effective as it was able to reach the vast majority of the population and engage young people. 45 million people in the UK alone use social media, which is 67% of our entire population. This significant percentage could most likely contain someone in every household in the UK, enabling each and every person to get the guidance that they needed. I am sure everyone remembers advice such as, 'sing happy birthday twice while washing your hands', a campaign that reached every corner of the UK through social media. We all also learnt about clapping for the NHS through social media because Instagram stories and TikToks reminded us every evening to support our key workers throughout this troubling time.

TikTok has around 639 million monthly users and has been downloaded over 2 billion times, and I can almost guarantee that this vast number of

users is down to lockdown. Teenagers around the world have become obsessed by TikTok dances, challenges and trends and has been used as a form of escapism through the frustration of lockdown. According to surveys, 67% of consumers increased their use of Instagram during the first lockdown, showing how social media truly became a welcomed distraction for us all. We even discovered how other countries were suffering and how they were coping with Covid which helped us to comprehend the magnitude of its impact. In fact, one of the key benefits of access to social media has been the sense of unification gained through our mutual suffering and shared optimism.

Social media has had an unparalleled effect on our mental health throughout the different stages of lockdown. Families have been ripped apart, friends and loved ones separated and people forced into complete isolation. For many in the UK, lockdown was the hardest thing they have ever had to experience. Thousands of people reached the lowest point in their mental health and felt as though the situation was inescapable. However, social media shone as an unexpected emblem of hope. Zoom saved us. Zoom dinners, quizzes, parties. I didn't even know Zoom existed before lockdown but quickly it became my sanctuary, the only thing I could look forward to between the loneliness and uncertainty. Every Friday night at 7pm, my mum and I sat down together and did a Zoom quiz with our friends, a small sense of reality. I did Zoom birthday parties with my friends, which was strange at first but also so nice just to laugh and sing and feel that human connection once again. Without facetime and Zoom we wouldn't have seen the faces of our loved ones for months on end. In April 2020, Zoom announced they had 300 million people participating in zoom meeting every day. Of course, this was for school and work but also grandparents met their grandchildren over zoom, families ate dinner together and friends simply chatted; society came together.

Fundamentally, social media has had a staggering impact on our overall experience of lockdown and the pandemic. As discussions emerge about 'the new roaring 20s' we are reminded of the 1918 pandemic and forced to imagine this experience without social media. This realisation has made me so grateful for this access and should serve as a reminder to us all that, however hard these lockdowns may have been, we came through it united and **stronger than ever**.

# BEYOND THE SCREEN

During 2020, we had to adapt our whole lives to follow the stay-at home orders. The main themes of 2020 consisted of loneliness, mask wearing, social distancing, plummeting economies, a fear for the future, and a new virtual life that the world had to accept.

Covid-19 has changed our lives for better and for worse; affecting the way people work, go to school, socialise with others, and the way we learned to process this unprecedented reality. Throughout the pandemic, we have made it a commitment to reach out and hear from those most affected- children interacting and learning with their friends and teachers on screens, young people struggling with joblessness, and the elderly coping with isolation away from their children and grandchildren. Not only this, but Covid changed the way we view mental health. At one point of the pandemic, it's most likely everyone suffered in one way or another from loneliness, or anxiety, or depression, and other mental illnesses. Mental health has never been more critical than it is currently. With new mental health issues becoming a long-term effect from Covid, mental health issues are still worsening now, due to the result of the pandemic.

Not surprisingly, the pandemic has triggered a wave of mental health issues and a huge rise in depressing statistics. In Great Britain, 5% (2.6 million adults) had reported they felt lonely often/always between 3 April and 3 May 2020. This group is referred to as 'chronically lonely'. Chronic loneliness occurs when feelings of uncomfortable social isolation worsen and continue consistently over a long period of time. It's characterized by the relentless feeling of being divided from others and unable to interact on a deeper level with others. Chronic loneliness can lead to other health issues, including depression, sleep disorders, substance use and emotional problems. There was no doubt that there would be a deterioration in mental health from taking social interactions for granted, to then feeling completely isolated from family and friends within a matter of days was a massive shock for the human brain; something we as a population would never have thought would happen and could have never prepared for.

Many individuals who lived full successful lives before the pandemic were shaken to their core. Individuals who never imagined they would experience feelings of anxiety and depression within their lifetime, are now learning mental health disorders can affect anyone at any time and it is normal.

Pre-pandemic, there was always a stigma around mental health but one of the positive results has been that mental health illnesses have become more and more normalised and less taboo. This is due to the amount of people who suffered mentally in one way or another corresponding with the awareness raised on social media and within the news all over the world. Owing to life becoming predominantly virtual therefore meaning, that many were also able to seek mental health care immediately through online therapy and support because we were able to share or discuss rising anxious feelings in the comfort of our own homes, almost on demand, instead of waiting days/weeks for an appointment- something that will hopefully continue. However, a quarter of adults and young people who tried to access some forms of support were unable to do so, as they felt uncomfortable using technology to discuss their mental health issues. Although access to children's and teenage mental health services also saw a slight drop in referrals and access to treatment over the first lockdown, according to analysis by the Children's Commissioner, nonetheless, there has been an increase in referrals since then and referrals are continuing to rise in statistics.

The Pandemic also positively forced many people to learn how to be still, to be okay with being alone, and to find ways in which nurture our minds and bodies. A practice whereby many people have learned how to care for not just their bodies but minds much more, and many were able to be more in touch with their emotions and going forward people are able to be more in connection with their emotions which is proven to better us as it gains resilience whilst also helping others to, by becoming empathetic when people around us need it. Overall, the COVID-19 pandemic has proven to **challenge people's mental health throughout as, half of adults of**

and over two thirds of young people said their mental health has gotten worse during the period of lockdown restrictions, from early April to mid-May 2020. As a result, it has demonstrated that Covid has caused a monumental well-being issue to the population where many of us have really struggled and had to learn different coping mechanisms for ways the self-isolations have affected us. On the other hand, it has also allowed all of us to appreciate the smaller things in life and to not take freedom for granted and to take as many opportunities in life as possible. Nevertheless, as more people get the COVID-19

vaccine, the longer-term mental health effects of the pandemic will still need to be addressed. We must continue to check in with ourselves and with each other, to fight for access to mental health treatment, and to find peace and self-care in our daily lives.

Alix Williams



Artwork by Gus Hamilton James

# STILL RICH; STILL INDIFFERENT

Bong Joon-ho and F. Scott Fitzgerald composed their masterpieces over 90 years apart and with a profound cultural gulf: *The Great Gatsby* encapsulates the hedonistic 'roar' of 1920s America while *Parasite* examines modern social disparity through two Seoul families. And yet the two pieces offer a remarkably similar commentary on class struggle. At the end of the two tales, there is an overwhelming sense that the pursuit of socio-economic success is fundamentally futile and unachievable for those at the bottom, equally expressing the rigidity of class boundaries and one's immobility within them.

Fitzgerald focuses on the traditional notion of the 'American Dream' as the desire to go beyond the constraints of one's social standing, achieving immense prosperity and hence simultaneous social acclaim. Jay Gatsby serves as an emblem of this desire and is used by the author to highlight its uselessness, exhibiting how his idealism, fuelled through this dream, leads to his demise. Bong Joon-ho presents a kind of modern mutation of this concept and the notion that one's position in the social hierarchy overshadows hard work and talent. Both *Gatsby* and the Kim family set about



Photograph by Oscar Talbot

attempting to achieve their ambitions through the manipulation and deception of those of a higher class; yet why do our sympathies lie with these characters? The Kims' desperation and poverty is emphasised through the use of architecture in *Parasite*; the semi-basement house is situated half underground and half at street level, almost mocking the family with its straddling of social acceptance and rejection through its semi-underground position. The irony that 'higher' living mirrors social acceptance, foreshadows the Kims' near success as they move upwards physically and socially; and yet their frequent returns back, at one point to a submerged home, remind us of the firm anchor that will keep them 'below'. The extreme contrast between the Kim's home and the Parks' aesthetic mansion, positioned symbolically above a flight of stairs, only reiterates the 'upstairs-downstairs' message of the film, providing a visual representation not only of social inequality, but of the coercive and socially deterministic aspects of our cities.

Similarly, Fitzgerald's use of geography within *The Great Gatsby* evokes the notion of setting deciding one's fate. The bleak 'Valley of Ashes', a fleeting glimpse of poverty within the novel, is situated halfway between New York City and the West Egg. Again, positioning areas of economic hardship in a balance between hope and doom and mocking the residents with their close proximity to success. Fitzgerald merely glances at this area of desperation, as it is described along the way of a journey from the affluent East and West Egg to the City with patriarch Tom Buchanan stopping only to flaunt his lower-class mistress. With the comparison in mind, one begins to consider the title, *Parasite*. In a way, each class dimension parasitically latches on to another in the pursuit of one of two things; increased social status or escapism. Bong Joon-ho and Fitzgerald suggest that lower classes use those above their station for economic and social gain, or to create a kind of disillusioned sense of success for themselves, while the upper classes, bored of their own mundane stability, carelessly seek those below them to distract from their dissatisfaction.

Perhaps the most interesting dimension of this

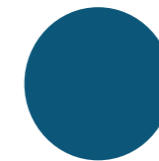
comparison is the mutual representation of the senses as a key factor in identifying class. In *Parasite* it is the lingering smell that symbolises class conflicts; the wealthy Park family continuously complain about some unpleasant odour which usurps the Kim family and threatens their web of lies as it alludes to their connection. This 'semi-basement smell', as Ki Jung describes in the film, is the stigma that they cannot escape from due to its institutionalised presence in society. While considering the significance of this within the film, it occurred to me that 'dust' is framed in a similar way within *The Great Gatsby*. While smell is what ties the Kims to their poverty, dust is what pulls Gatsby and Myrtle out of their dreams of idealism and into the brutal reality of their upbringings. Myrtle attempts to escape her impoverished life in the 'Valley of Ashes' through her affair with the wealthy

Tom Buchanan however she is enabled merely to dream of a life beyond ash and dust, as her ambition leads to her eventual death, with Fitzgerald describing how her blood mingled 'with the dust'. She is confined, even in death, to her position in society which is symbolised through this inescapable sense of decay. For both writers the concrete accretions of poverty are a stubborn and important block to the abstract dreams the characters try to live by.

Images of light are often associated with wealth and prestige and both writers make use of this trope. Fitzgerald describes a 'green light' which Gatsby reaches out for, suggesting his yearning for a place in upper class society. The light is simultaneously symbolic of Daisy Buchanan and the wealth which she epitomises in Gatsby's dream, hence the colour green which is reminiscent of the American dollar bill. As Gatsby is shown to obsess over this light which he is eternally chasing, it teases him as it remains just out of reach. There is a vast array of symbolic light sources within *Parasite*, yet one of the most poignant for me personally is the use of artificial light controlled by the man, Geun-sae, living in the Parks' secret basement. He is obsessed by the patriarch of the family, Dong Ik, and meticulously turns on the lights of the house in unison with his footsteps. This small piece of control has given him a false sense of power within the house and creates the illusion that he is in some way involved in the family dynamic.

This obsession with Dong Ik can be related back to Gatsby's infatuation with Daisy; through this, both Fitzgerald and Bong Joon-ho show how their characters use somebody as an emblem of their own dreams and desires, ultimately obsessing over them as a projection of their pursuit of their lifestyle and achievements. In killing these dreamers, one is forced to consider the doomed nature of the lower class in both *The Great Gatsby* and *Parasite*, which equally portray the incapability of truly moving up the social ladder through their criticisms of extreme wealth disparity and lack of equal opportunity.

Iona Wilson



# F A R M O R E T H A N J U S T A M O N T H

Can one month  
of Black History  
each year ever  
be enough?

It is challenging to find a Western music genre that hasn't come from, or been influenced by, black people and black culture. Yet, even now, the roots of many modern-day music genres are widely perceived to be of white origin.

In the 2020s black artists like Megan Thee Stallion, Lil Nas X, Drake and Doja Cat are dominating the music industry, yet when looking through the list of Grammy 2021 winners these artists are not receiving the credit they deserve for their talent and success. However much we may wish it isn't, the music industry remains racist - **60% of black artists say that they have experienced racism within the industry**, from discriminatory acts to a "sometimes hostile working environment". This was cited in a recent article by the BBC's Music Correspondent, Mark Savage - Racism in the Music Industry is Upfront & Personal - reflecting the views of 1,718 black musicians and industry professionals working in the UK.

Black artists not gaining credit for their work has been a recurring theme since the late 1800s. Genres such as swing and jazz were created in African American communities across the United States, then 'borrowed' and popularised by white people, who continued to segregate and marginalise the black people within these communities who had created the very music that they enjoyed.

When imagining the 1920s the Great Gatsby, flapper dresses, prohibition and jazz music spring to mind. Jazz was the most popular genre of the 20s and originated within African American communities in New Orleans and Louisiana. Non-music-reading black musicians would improvise and collaborate with other black musicians who could read and write music, thus creating the iconic improvisational and technical style. Yet it was not until various white musicians started playing jazz, most notably the musician Paul Whiteman and his all-white orchestra who performed 'Rhapsody in Blue' in 1924, that it became recognised as a legitimate musical genre. A few years earlier in 1917 the "first Jazz recording" had been recorded by another all-white band, the Original Dixieland Jazz Band, who had not only copied but had "borrowed to the point of plagiarism" from the African American influences of New Orleans.

Coming a decade or so after jazz, a genre that many people do not realise came from black people was Rock 'n' Roll. Elvis Presley may have been the King of Rock 'n' Roll but the Godmother of Rock 'n' Roll, Sister Rosetta Tharpe was pairing her gospel songs with electric guitar long before Elvis had sung his first word. Her style of music influenced nearly all famous Rock 'n' Roll musicians from Little Richard to Elvis to Tina Turner, yet it was only in 2018 that she rightfully won her place in the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame.

In the jazz category of the Grammys from 2018-2020, nearly all the awards were won by white jazz musicians, revealing that white people are still dominating a genre created by black people. Last year, some progress was made when the Grammys stopped using the word 'urban' to describe many genres of black origin such as reggae, Afro-pop, R&B and hip-hop. The word has long been used to isolate black artists and genres and was described by Tyler, the Creator, a successful black rapper, as the 'politically correct way to say the n-word'.

Rap was stated to be the most popular music genre of 2020. Much of the genre's early influence was subconsciously inspired by the racism black people experienced in mid-1900s America, more specifically the systematic racial separation in the 30s and 40s. It was then that white people were encouraged financially to move to the suburbs, but that financial support was not extended to the African American population, the intention being to isolate them to the urban inner-city areas.

The prevalence of gangster themes and references in rap lyrics can be related to the proliferation of gangs in the mid-1900s. Since the communities had become more overtly divided, violent white gangs had begun to emerge, their purpose to chase out black people from white areas (known as 'sundown towns' of which some still exist and remain as dangerous today). Black gangs too proliferated, to protect themselves against the hostile white gangs in the absence of sufficient law enforcement. So now when white rappers, such as Eminem (who has won more Grammy awards for Best Rap Album than any other rapper in history), are applauded and yet have never experienced the racism and marginalization that underpinned rap originally,

it is very clear why the appropriation of black music has arisen as an issue.

The introduction of the banjo to America in the 1700s by enslaved Africans began another popular genre, country music. They were forced to perform for guests at white events where they combined the banjo with other European instruments, and before long white people were asking to be taught how to play it. The banjo rapidly became the signature instrument of country music, and black country singers remained a constant, although shrouded, influence on the genre. Despite the significance their culture had on country music, many black artists find themselves excluded from the community, with many country radio stations playing considerably less music from black musicians than white, and in certain cases refusing to play it at all.

Other genres that many may not realise were created by black people included house music, which emerged from the black/latinx LGBTQ+ clubs of the 70s, and techno, a fusion of funk, disco and gospel, which was a form of protest and revolutionary sound for black people. However, as both these genres were swept up by European artists and their audiences, the true origins of each genre were forgotten.

Music is about self-expression and enjoyment, both universal impulses, and should not be exclusive to one group of people or another. I hope this article may help to emphasise the recognition still needed for black creativity through the decades of modern musical history.

Seren Johnson



Artwork by Gus Hamilton James

# HOW MUCH IS MUSIC WORTH?

The debate over how much a song is worth is not new. In 2014 and 2015 artists Taylor Swift and Prince pulled their catalogues from Spotify shelves as a statement against the streaming service; artists of that size and calibre are going to survive regardless of their actions – with millions of diehard fans and deep pockets worldwide. However, at the other end of the spectrum is where Swift was focused; “It is my opinion that music should not be free... I hope they (artists) don’t underestimate themselves or undervalue their art”. With Spotify paying out approximately £0.003 per stream – the art of independent music has become synonymous with diminishing returns.

To earn money specifically from Spotify, a track must be played in its entirety for it to count. Following this, the money from the stream doesn’t go directly to the artist – 70% goes to the master (owner of the rights to the music) and publishing rights owners and 30% to Spotify itself. That money is then distributed with an algorithm that divides the artists streams over the total Spotify streams; meaning that if you

listen to a new or emerging artist, the value of the time you spent listening to them is allocated to already established artists too.

Consider the hours of practice, dedication and training required to create a song, much less to build a career in music – then for a faceless entity to deem it worth £0.003. This has forced many artists onto loose footing; in combination with the pandemic the income of the music industry has plummeted – live shows could not be played for upwards of a year as well as royalties being significantly cut due to cafes and bars not being able to open and play music. Musicians are leaving the scene at an alarming rate – simply unable to support themselves – and music itself has taken a hit because of it with talented young artists unable to get a foot in the door and rope together a platform to give out their flair to the world.

A bizarre example of the economics of the music industry occurred in 2015 with east coast hip-hop collective Wu-Tang Clan auctioning their single copy album *Once Upon a Time in Shaolin*. It is the group’s seventh album and currently holds the record for the most expensive piece of music ever sold. The idea for it initially came from member RZA’s and producer Cilvaringz’ critiques of online streaming and piracy – hoping to return the status of music to that of a fine art. The project reportedly features verses from FC Barcelona players, *Game of Thrones* actress Carice van Houten, and two vocal appearances from Cher, it also cannot be sold for commercial gain until 2103.

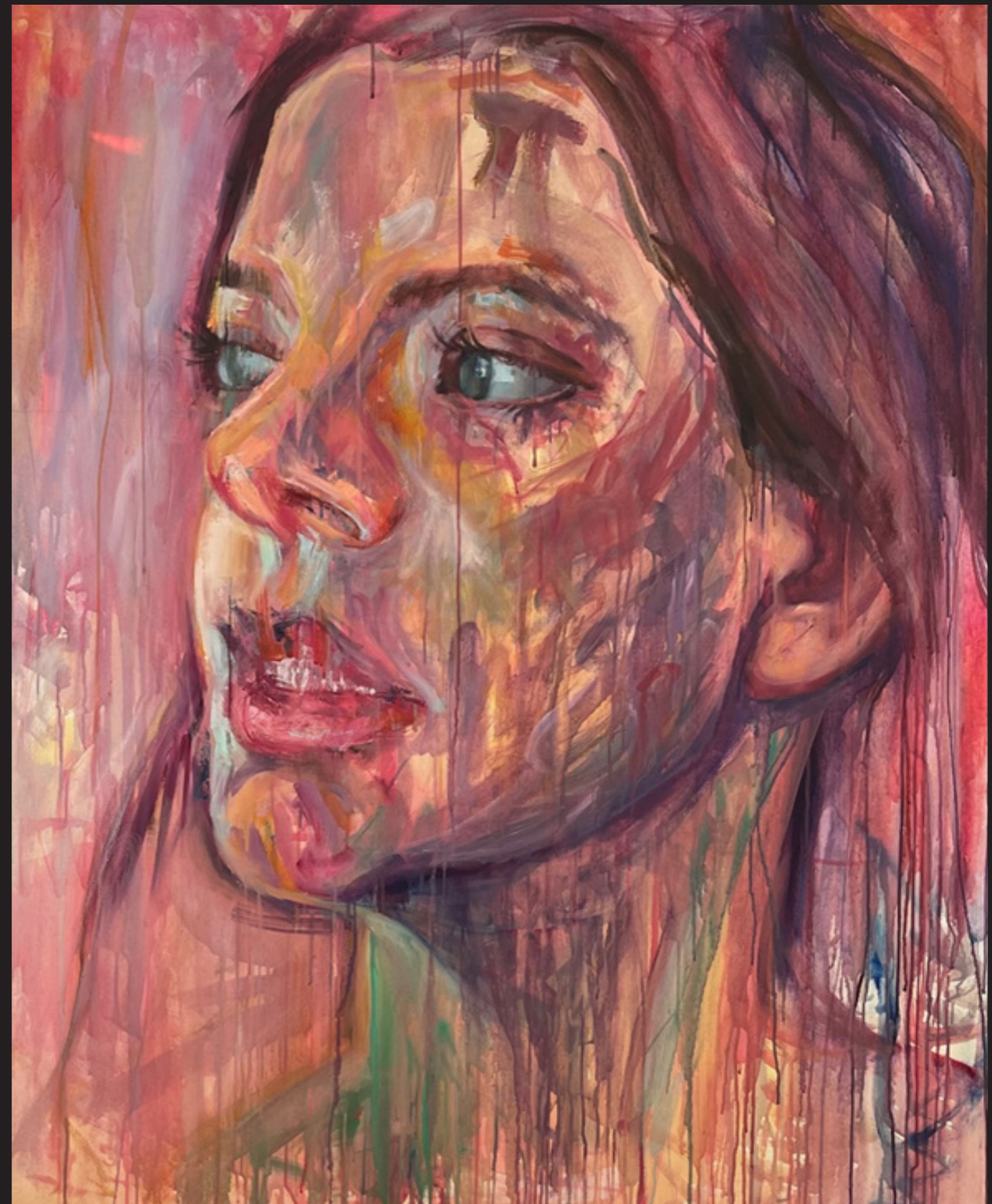
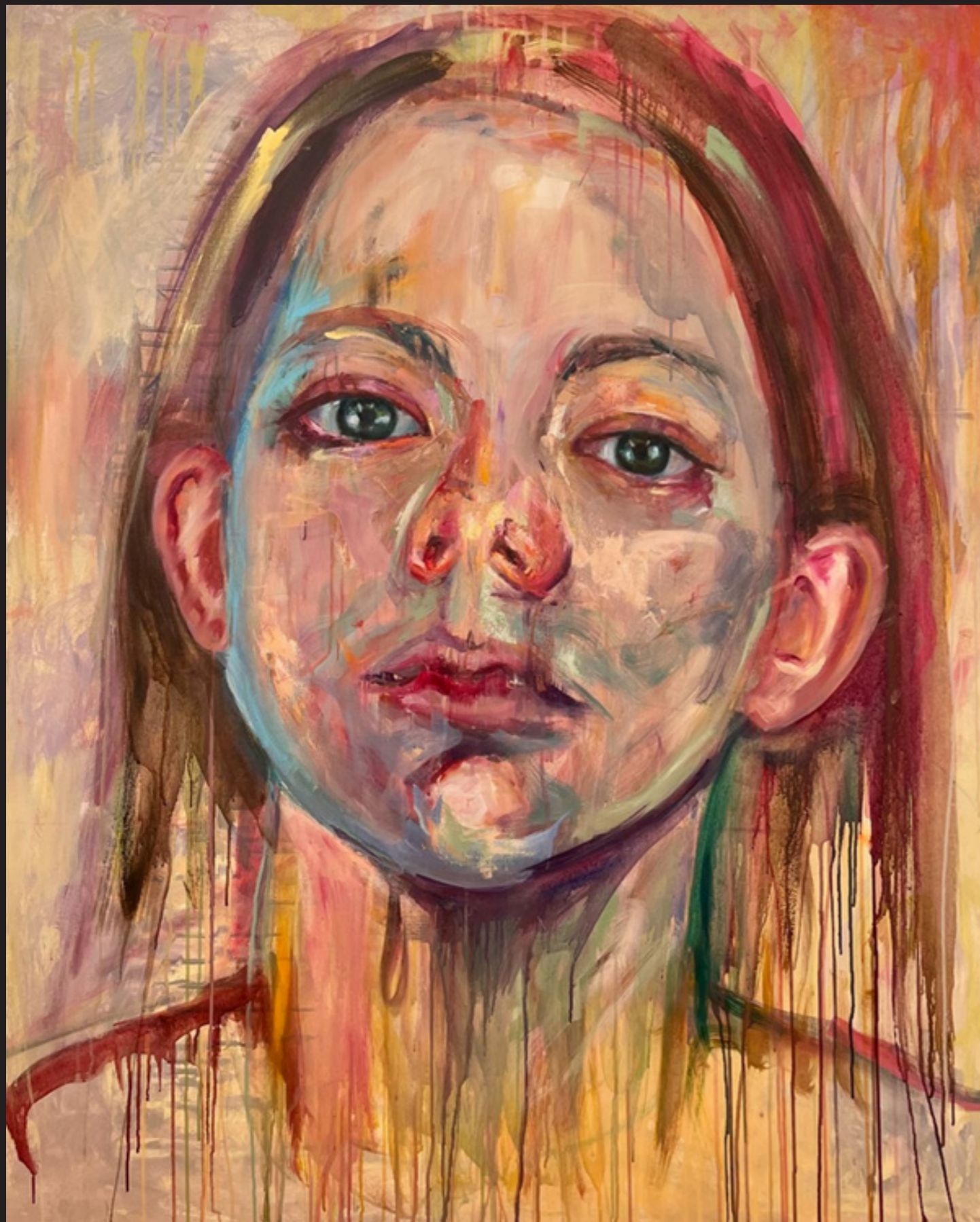
The album sold to Turing Pharmaceuticals CEO Martin Shkreli, for \$2m, after a long legal process and bidding war he finally received the album on August 26th, 2015. Then, following numerous financial and legal problems unrelated to the album, it made its way into the hands of NFT collectors PleasrDao, this time for \$4m in October 2021. As of the time of writing, the album is currently still private.

Another avenue of music revenue that cannot be ignored is the vinyl resurgence, and to a lesser extent, CDs and cassettes too. With any artist worth their salt releasing their albums on all 3 media, 2021 has become the year to support your favourite artists by purchasing a physical copy of their music. Great ways to do this are from local record stores, and on the streaming service Bandcamp, where on Fridays all proceeds

go directly into the artists pockets – a shining example of how musicians and services can work together hand-in-hand to share music we love and allow the artists to keep doing what they love. Spotify is in a unique position to be able to actively help musicians. The business model can change, and it can be successful. Can Spotify see the value of its own artists?

Harry Passingham

“the art of independent music has become synonymous with diminishing returns.”



## THROUGH THEIR LENS

Fame, stardom, celebrity. To many this sort of recognition is the coveted prize of human existence. But what if this is just an illusion? This picture of fame and stardom, simply a fiction created by our imaginations to mask a reality that isn't as shiny and appealing as we have been led to believe. If you look at the way women, particularly those in the entertainment industry, are treated by the press you'll notice a disturbing pattern. A pattern of **vilification, mistreatment, harassment, and abuse**. Shocking behaviours that are completely unacceptable and yet no-one seems to be, truly, doing anything about it. This isn't anything new, we've seen this happen time and time again, all the way back to the early days of Hollywood. And yet somehow this still happens today. On 6th February 2021 a ground-breaking documentary, 'Framing Britney Spears' was released. The documentary detailed the abuse and mistreatment experienced by the popstar icon at the hands of the media, and the repercussions on her mental health. This caused people to realise the horrific ways that many young women are treated by the media. They are sexualised, slut-shamed and subjected to outrageous beauty standards. They are judged for everything they do. They are ridiculed, their issues are trivialised, and their boundaries are violated. This is a war waged by the media against women.

One of the most famous and tragic examples of the consequences of the media's mistreatment is Marilyn Monroe. Marilyn remains a hugely significant figure in pop culture and is seen as the ultimate symbol of Hollywood and the iconic sex symbol of the 1950s and early 1960s. From the very start of her career she was ceaselessly sexualised and objectified, with filmmakers often giving her minor roles which would focus on her appearance as opposed to her ability as an actress. As a result of her looks and confidence with her sexuality people didn't take her seriously, neither as an actress nor as a person. She had become typecast by studios into playing the misogynistic archetype of the sexy, ditsy blonde which affected the way she was perceived by the public. Even when directors finally began casting her in more emotionally complex roles to exhibit her acting talents, many of her films still relied on her sex appeal for marketing which made rebranding her public persona even more difficult. Marilyn was routinely looked down on for openly embracing her sexuality by the press and public alike, often being compared to other actresses such as Audrey Hepburn who was deemed to have more 'acceptable' behaviours. **The public image of Marilyn was a mask for her suffering.** In her life she endured two very public divorces, a miscarriage, fertility issues, struggles with mental health, depression and substance abuse eventually resulting in her untimely death. Although not related to the entertainment industry, the media's representation of Monica Lewinsky is yet another example of both the internalised misogyny and the bias against young women in the media. On January 17th 1998 the news broke that the President of the United States at the time,

Bill Clinton, was having an affair with 25-year-old White House intern Monica Lewinsky. The young intern, who was only 22 when she met Clinton, suddenly found her face plastered across every newsstand and tabloid cover in the country. The media swiftly painted her as a homewrecker, a **'bimbo'** and an immoral person who had set out to seduce the president from the beginning in order to ruin his marriage. She was regularly slut-shamed by the media and was routinely subjected to invasive questions and sexist remarks. In a 1999 interview where Lewinsky spoke out about the affair, she was asked on prime time television by reporter Barbara Walters, 'Where was your self-respect?', something which was never asked of President Clinton. The way the media treated Monica in contrast to how they treated Clinton could not have been more evident. Bill Clinton was not only a married man 27 years older than Monica, with a daughter living in the White House, but he was also her boss and the most powerful man in the country. Even after the constant ridicule and dehumanisation that she had to endure at the hands of the global media, she was pressured into making a public apology to Bill, his family, and all of America. Monica Lewinsky was publicly humiliated, she was the media's punching bag whilst the man who took advantage of her age, gender and position went on to be re-elected because the media was on his side.

Britney Spears was undoubtedly an icon of the new millennium. From the moment she burst onto the pop music scene in 1998, at the age of 16, with her debut single 'Baby One More Time' she immediately grabbed the attention of the public and as a result the media. From the very start of her career, she was routinely sexualised in the media and has become a continuous theme in her life. There was routine speculation regarding her virginity, and she was subjected to invasive personal questions in interviews. This became more intense when in 2000 she announced that she was dating \*NSYNC member Justin Timberlake. The media profited enormously from this relationship as they were both equally famous and were crowned teen royalty at the time. Subsequently, when the couple decided to breakup in 2002 both the media and the public chose sides. The majority of fans and the media believed Justin's 'Cry Me A River' narrative, the song painting Britney as a lying cheater. This was the first time the media turned viciously against Britney, with most of them blaming her for the breakup without even bothering to listen

to her side of the story. She was 21 at the time and yet her relationship issues were being played out on a global media stage for everyone to see. Due to the allegations of cheating, the media sought revenge on behalf of Justin and thus a complete takedown of her public image ensued. Paparazzi were incentivised with huge pay cheques to cross moral boundaries and invade her personal space to get pictures, especially unflattering ones. This often placed Britney in dangerous situations where she was being criticised for her behaviour. At this point the press were trivialising Britney's mental and emotional health, branding her crazy when she shaved her head in 2007 and regularly publishing images of her crying or in distress. The media painted her as mentally unstable, ignoring the fact that they were culpable by routinely provoking and harassing her. The media's mistreatment of Britney eventually culminated in the loss of her autonomy. Even now at the age of 39 Britney Spears is living under a conservatorship that was placed on her during this period, a time when she needed to be helped not punished.

This article is merely a snapshot, a momentary glance, into a world of media moguls and their insatiable appetite for success. These women are just a small glimpse at a much wider issue, how the media are, and have always been, systematically mistreating and harassing young women. This is not acceptable. Media outlets need to be held more accountable for their actions as this sort of regular abuse and invasion of privacy has become commonplace in the media and is normalised by the press. These young women deserve dignity, they are human beings, and we need to treat them as such, rather than just objects of desire which can be exploited to make money.

Victoria Corfield

Photograph by Iona Wilson



# 1920s? 2020s!

## Exploring the Fashion Reroll

It is not unknown that today's generation, the Western 'Gen Z', have a fascination with classification, particularly when it comes to fashion 'aesthetics'. Videos on the popular social app Tiktok show many examples of these trends, from grunge to cottage-core, light academia, and e-girl to name a few, pinning staple wardrobe essentials to influences. You may be left wondering what do we actually mean by these aesthetics? Although many of us get the concept of the small titles of emojis best representing each 'aesthetic', they do not quite dig deep enough into the real backbones of these styles.

Most often heard on social media, the term aesthetic refers to stylised and visualised trends – often inspired by the likes of Pinterest. The word 'trend' has also become increasingly relevant – in the last ten years, parents have noticed the recirculation of their adolescent and prime year fashion. From the classic light-wash baggy jeans, to timeless wardrobe staples of bomber jackets and little black slip dresses, businesses and fashion icons alike have been desperately spotting for so-called recirculating trends to market and beat the competition for sales. Recently, high-street fashion brand Zara has taken a image of a viral dress and recreated it.

From my own observation, **we have time warped.** Going from skinny jeans, plaid designs and Juicy Couture tracksuits during 2010, into a neon athletic-inspired, street-style heavily dependent on the 1980s. We are talking about the leap of Y2K Ashley Tisdale on the Disney Channel red carpet, rocking the vest over a long-sleeve top on a red carpet, Paris Hilton baby tees with low-rise jeans era into corset top casuals.

Assuming we expect the return of the roaring 20s – let's look at how we define key characteristics of Western 20s fashion. Undoubtedly, there are thoughts of Daisy Buchanan flapper dresses and men like Speedy's Lloyd in pinstripes topped with a straw boater. Of course, those with a bit more interest in the design movements will conceive ideas of Art Deco at its finest (think Downton Abbey). However, underlying the glitz

and glam first perceived is a modern movement from the previous century of the Edwardians. For Edwardian women the familiarity was bone corsets, parasols, long skirts and many fluffy, ruffled, flouncy layers – not dissimilar to the Georgian wardrobe seen in the likes of Bridgerton. Overall, very conservative – no skin on show!

For the men, we look more to the recognisable fashion of Peaky Blinders – three-piece suits (of course including a waistcoat), and for the sophisticated a walking cane of some sort paired with a form of head attire. Men had a wide choice of hats; the most popular being the classic top hat, bowler's hat or in summer a straw boater and perhaps for the younger or working-class market, a newsboy's hat.

In contrast, the time of the 20s was a response for simplicity, steering away from layers and formality in favour of simple shapes and comfort. Losing clothing was adopted, showing more skin, while for men sportswear made its first debut as mainstream fashion. Natural fibres were favoured – cotton and wool most affordable, but silk, velvet, satin and linen available to the high-end designers. Minimalism was big in the 20s, adornment of clothing was simple and restrained to basic designs, lacking highly embellished and impractical details.

For women the go-to was dresses, every day. Younger women wore what was considered sports-style dresses, knee-length at shortest, accompanied by a low waisted belt and pleated (much like today's tennis skirts). Similar characteristics can be seen in the infamous flapper dress – the bust line flatten rather than accentuated while the shortened skirts allowed women to dance Charleston as such. To uphold 'proper attire' women were expected to wear different styles of dresses during the morning, afternoon and evening. While tea dresses in the afternoon were looser fitting, they saw the popularity of shift dresses, with straight bodices, giving women the new boyish look that was to become so mainstream.

One of the first women to incentivise this fully was **Coco Chanel** – cutting her hair short, wearing trousers, and restricting her bust, expressing a progressive and bohemian outlook on the world. As for the recently established term of cocktail dresses, matching shoes, gloves

and hat were a must, while we saw the rebirth of embellishment – pearls, sashes, rhinestones and fringes to list a few.

For men, there was little definition between the two eras in terms of formal daytime wear except for shorter suit jackets; similar accessories, long overcoats and wide lapel, three-piece suits in tweed or wool were adopted. For the evening tuxedos and dinner jackets were the go-to. Initially the suits respected those of the first world war, but this was lost after the first half of the decade.

Instead of braces and fitted shirts men began experimenting with athletic wear due to the newfound leisure – the first breakthrough of sportswear being mainstream! This new founded fashion trend birthed Chuck Taylor's Converse All Stars which started out exclusively for baseball. I cannot describe the street-style, sportswear looks for the 1920s men as anything more accurate than 'American preppy'; knit cable sweaters and golf vests, smart cricket and tennis jumpers (paired with a dress shirt) were an acceptable substitute for a jacket (Which prior to then was deemed 'improper'). These partnered with baggy, light coloured, sometimes plaid trousers and finished with two-toned Oxford or golf shoes were considered the new fashion.

So, what can we gauge from this analysis – how can we make a prediction into the trends inspired by these Roaring 20s trends? One huge impact of fashion was of course Covid; for those who are interested in economics, there was an inevitable recession because of reduced consumer spending. The prolonged hours spent inside, lack of motivation/productivity and need for comfort perhaps reflects our new preference towards lounge wear and casual attire.

With society adapting to the pandemic the huge breath we took from life has deterred many from the 24/7 constantly, productive day-to-day routine established by social media and lazy convenience in everyday design (voice-controlled kitchen appliances and self-driving Tesla's to mark the most extremes). Many still work from home and will likely continue to do so going forward – ditching a full week to perhaps three or four-day working weeks. Added complexity and amount in life, will no doubt start to lead more towards minimalism – a good example being Kim Kardashian's specially

designed house.

Not only will current social affairs affect the Roaring 20s' resurrection, but we can also consider environmental factors that may play a key part in the act. Increasingly extreme consequences of climate change are finally forcing large corporations into change, shaming fast and throw-away fashion. Both quality, natural fibres and simplicity are arguably the start of a solution to waste and pollution, demanding for items of clothing that are versatile, durable, less susceptible to regular washing and easy to fix without the ridiculous cost – name it, the fashion of the 1920s.

Kira Tenk



Photograph by Oscar Talbot

Autonomy. 'Freedom from external control or influence'. This may seem a simple concept that dictates our everyday lives, right? On the surface, everyone has the right to vote, the liberty of an equal paying job, access to free speech; but the more I look around me, even in Bath, the more I see even the most basic of civil liberties dissipate. Not only can women not freely vote in over 11 countries worldwide, but the average woman also earns 74 cents for every man's dollar in the USA and every time one woman feels compelled to speak her mind, guaranteed there are 10 people to telling her not to. If the most basic of female autonomy is collapsing in front of us, why should we be surprised that well over 1 million women are victims of domestic abuse in the UK, or that Texas has introduced an inhumane 'heartbeat bill', or even that 137 women across the world are killed by their partners every day. You may have read this introduction and thought to yourself "no this isn't for me", or "I respect women, I don't need to read this", but I am here to tell you regardless of gender, race, or age; this is not a cry for help but a call to arms.

Sabina Nessa was walking to get a drink with her friends at 8 at night. She was murdered. Sarah Everard walked on a main road and asked for assistance from a police officer. She was abducted, raped, and murdered. They followed the rules, right? They walked on reasonably well-lit roads at a reasonable hour in 'sensible clothes' (as to deter the uncontrollable male gaze, of course), and yet they gone well before their time. Of course, there was outrage, there was disgrace to be had, yet there was virtually no change. A MET officer's immediate response was to tell women how to 'stay safe on the streets' and not to tell men, 'Actually, maybe you shouldn't follow, rape and abduct women'. Girls, for how long have you been told to not walk anywhere alone after 6pm? Or make sure you have a rape whistle with you if you're going out! We are told to adapt to our surroundings, but then told not to overreact and create a self-fulfilling prophecy. For the situation to change, the narrative surrounding it needs to change as well.

More than this, one of the key issues that has come to light in the past few months has been the disturbing spike in violence against women cases, particularly domestic violence. I feel as though every day I read about a new case of

domestic violence or abuse gone unprosecuted, but I never seem to see it in the news unless there has been a public outcry. Despite this, the UN has declared a 'global pandemic of femicide'. This is a terrifying prospect in 2021; an epidemic that has been covered up by another, leading to 6 women killed every hour. Every hour. Worldwide, 50-70% of women are murdered by their partners, and 1 in 3 women have been abused or coerced (most often by a member of their own family) meaning they're not even safe in home. Out of 1.32 million reported domestic abuse cases, only

60,000 convictions will take place which is just over 4%. This leaves 96% of abusers to continue abusing and 100% of survivors living every day in fear. Upon reading this statistic, my heart broke. It is not only terrifying, but actively heart breaking that this type of abuse has become so common, it has become normalised. Only through proactivity, can we see progress.

dystopia I feel we are living in. These are the never-ending new abortion laws. On the back of Poland's 2020 abortion law changes (only permitting abortion in certain cases of rape and incest) it felt it was only a matter of time before it would spread. This was clearly seen in Texas' new abortion laws, becoming one of the most restrictive in the world and only allowing abortion before the 'foetal heartbeat' or 6-week mark. As is widely discussed, most women do not know they are pregnant before this date, with the ACLU reporting that 90% of Texan abortions happen past the 6 weeks mark. Not only this, but if you are seen as an 'accessory' to the treatment, you can be fined up to \$10,000. This is inhumane. Texas joins Oklahoma, Idaho and South Carolina in their 'heartbeat bill', proving that these limiting laws are spreading, and who's to say when it stops? If they don't retain an ounce of empathy for rape and incest victims, or even just women in need, then what can we count on?

As I look around me, I see a universal issue that I understand does not have a universal solution, but I think human compassion is a good place to start.

Bella Chicco

IT'S UNIVERSAL



Photograph by Thea Sprawson



# PROHIBITION

by Euan Hatvany

**When you think of the roaring twenties, you may immediately think of flappers, cocktails, and jazz. But when dressing up for a fancy-dress Gatsby party, should we remember that this glamorous, romantic literary figure may have been a criminal bootlegger?**

The 1920s was the era of prohibition, an American nationwide ban on the sale and import of alcoholic beverages that lasted from 1920 until 1933. Was prohibition a giant failure, transforming America into a crime ridden nation? What does it tell us about modern attitudes to illegal substances and the drug legalization controversy in 2020s? The ban on alcohol was passed due to the persistent effort of the Temperance movement, driven by groups like the famous 'Anti-Saloon League.' This idea had been brewing (pun intended) out of a Christian evangelical fervor since the 1830s. In part a health reform movement in a time when medical understanding of alcoholism was lacking, many women supported prohibition as a way of stopping domestic violence with husbands 'drinking up the wages' and then abusing their wives and children. There was also a racist motive when immigrants were seen as jeopardizing America's identity with their culturally characterized "sinful" drinking patterns with Irish whisky, German beer, and Italian wine (the KKK were supporters of prohibition). Also, business owners wanted sober, efficient disciplined workers in emerging factories. As with drugs today, from alcohol and tobacco to marijuana, there are reasonable health arguments in support of prohibition. Was the way that the US government went about implementing and enforcing prohibition flawed? How can prohibition be seen as a failure if 90% of the existing alcohol industry was wiped out in a "shot"?

Prohibition didn't work in practice because of loopholes in the system. Over 6 million prescriptions were issued by doctors for "medicinal usage of alcohol". People were known to register fake synagogues and fake churches (having their friends be their congregations) or pretend to be priests and rabbis to get sacramental wine for "ritual use." You were allowed to own your own private alcohol supply if you did not buy or sell it and rich people had a year advanced warning of Prohibition, allowing them to stock up on alcohol. Californian wine makers figured out they could sell dried out dry raisin and grape cakes with warnings on labels saying "CAUTION - If you allow this to ferment it will turn into wine" which to the upstanding grape-cake makers, of course, would be a shocking idea! What was it like to live under prohibition? Speakeasies were illegal drinking clubs. There were over 30,000 speakeasies in New York by 1927. This was actually double the number

of bars there had been before Prohibition, so that was hardly a success for prohibitionists. A huge problem under prohibition was corruption. The politicians that had been advocating for prohibition were hypocrites. For example, the President in 1920, Warren G Harding, who although publicly a prohibitionist, was famously a huge drinker behind the scenes. There was even a secret bar in the Senate library, stocked with confiscated alcohol and bootleggers stored alcohol in the Congress cellars. Similar corruption exists today with the 'war on drugs' with politicians and officials being bribed by cartels in many countries such as Mexico and Columbia.

While rich people could easily buy alcohol, poor black and immigrant communities were facing large scale arrests and subject to police violence from prohibition agents. The rich could also afford safer alcohol than the poor who were buying it off the street. There is similar inequality today when it comes to drug offenses. Black Britons are around eight times more likely to be arrested and 10 times more likely to be sent to prison than their fellow white citizens. Arguing against the possible explanation that this difference simply reflects greater drug use by black people, academic research shows white and black people use drugs in about the same percentages and, in the case of Class A drugs, a greater percentage of white people use them. Dangerous prohibition era alcohol included Bathtub gin (which could blind people permanently). Some alcohol contained poisonous Metals, Gasoline or Ether (a powerful anesthetic used in surgeries). This is like today's society in which drugs for medical purposes are illegally used and illegal drugs on the streets are cut with other dangerous substances. People are losing their lives due to impure drugs with varying qualities which is directly attributable to the illegality of the drugs themselves because they aren't being regulated. Some alcohol on the streets in the 1920s was even poisoned by the government to prevent people drinking it... but people still did. The intention was to have the alcohol labelled as poisonous and have it act as a deterrent, but bootleggers would just strip the poison labels off. The New York times reported that in the mid to late 1920s hundreds of people were being killed by government poisoned alcohol. Prohibition led to the drastic rise of organized crime in the US, with emerging figures like Max Boo Boo Hoff and the renowned

Al Capone (aka Scarface). Previously crime was random and disorganized. After Prohibition, criminals came together to take advantage of the situation for enormous profits. Modern culture has romanticized this period with films such as 'Bugsy Malone,' making the period's violence trivial and comical. Yet, more than 1,000 people were killed in New York alone in Mob clashes during Prohibition. For example, the Valentine's Day massacre in 1922 which was a part of the Chicago Beer wars. This was the fighting between the North and South side of the city for control over the illegal liquor industry. Seven gangsters were gunned down in a garage by men pretending to be police officers sparking a national outcry. The event was linked to the notorious Al Capone and contributed to the end of prohibition. However, compare this with the violence and gun crime which exists in 2020s America, with a high proportion of crime related to drugs. Prohibition did contribute to a monumental change in American social and cultural life. Jazz bands flourished. Furthermore, now no longer separated from drinking together, both men and women came together in Speakeasies. Prohibition also encouraged another social event which has stood the test of time, the house party! Prohibition broke down old social barriers and racial mixing became more prevalent in society because of prohibition and bars. With thousands of underground bars and the blast of jazz musicians, alcohol-infused partying grew and drove the "Roaring Twenties." However, jazz and speakeasies were associated with alcohol in a comparable way to how drugs have become associated with certain types of music and types of night-time social events in recent times. For example, cannabis with the hippies and rock music of the 60s, cocaine with discos in the 80s and gangsta rap in the 90s. Nowadays, modern parties and raves are associated with drugs like MDMA. There is also an identification of hip hop and grime with drug culture.

Many factors led to the end of prohibition, not only the fact that it clearly was not working but also the rise of crime, corruption, and health risks. The final nail in the coffin was the 1929 Wall Street Crash followed by the Great depression, the economic disaster. This brought back the question of how to raise funds to restore the economy, and legalizing alcohol so it could be taxed seemed like the best solution. Prohibition was repealed in 1933. Will a world

economic depression caused by the COVID pandemic encourage governments to raise money by taxing rather than banning drugs? So how does the prohibition of the 1920s compare to prohibition of drugs in the 2020s? Well, the big comparison is with the prohibitive 'war on drugs' and drug use in the modern day. There are many similarities between these events, not only in culture but also in the highly oppressive, restrictive approach to prohibition. During the 1920s, armed bootleggers and criminals got rich feeding America's demand for alcohol. In the

## war on drugs,

armed traffickers and criminals get rich feeding America's and the world's demand for narcotics. However, with regards to prohibition, alcohol was legalized, the government regulated it and taxed it and the bootleggers went out of business. However, the "war on drugs," a global campaign led by the U.S. federal government of drug prohibition, still continues after 50 years. Why? Of course, there are many plausible reasons to keep drugs, like marijuana, illegal. For example, there are arguments that legalizing drugs could lead to normalizing use among kids and relegating its sale to profit-hungry corporations or governments with every incentive to increase addiction to advance their bottom line. But the war on drugs has also caused many issues, similar to that of 1920s prohibition. After 50 years of global prohibition, drugs are cheaper, more available and widely used than ever before. It is a \$300bn (£190bn) a year industry which is still growing. Trade has been gifted to organized criminals and unregulated dealers, creating vast costs for those least able to bear them. It is undermining public health and human rights, fuelling crime, corruption, and conflict, and destabilizing entire regions. Prohibition in the 1920s is a good example of why having a "war on drugs", in its current state, is ineffective. Changes must be made in how the world views and responds to the population's demand for drugs. Could one of these changes be widespread drug legalization? Possibly. Across the world, drug laws are being relaxed, from Uruguay to Portugal, Jamaica, and the Czech Republic where drug use and possession is being seen as a health issue instead of a crime. Regulation and legal control of drugs may take this lucrative marketplace out of the hands of criminals, saving lives. If American 1920s history has shown us anything, it is that an oppressive and restricting approach to drugs may not be the best solution.

**"Prohibition in the 1920s is a good example of why having a "war on drugs", in its current state, is ineffective. Changes must be made in how the world views and responds to the population's demand for drugs."**



**PARK LIFE**

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