

Scriptus

Issue 24

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Foreword

Hello dear friends and readers!

At last, here we are. Scriptus is pleased to present the first issue of the year and the 24th in its legacy. I would also like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as Scriptus's new editor-in-chief and I'm happy to continue the magazine's tradition of providing a platform for all of AUC to express itself, yay for freedom of speech. This issue is no different. Through the AUC voice, it goes without saying, we once again have a wide array of impressive pieces. Start by making your way through the Greek island of Chios, where Ina Schebler gives us first-hand refugee experiences while volunteering there last summer. We also have considerations on the multiple political parties in the Netherlands and personal accounts about identity in the dorms, as well as thoughts on the AUC Law Track. Wanted to attend the Tedx pitches this Wednesday but couldn't make it? Diana Ghidanac provides the full 360 of the evening in our report! Sure, political stuff gets exciting, but take a break from all of that with a food review, creative pieces and musicals. In addition, you might want to be up to date on the Oscars with Tekla Tevdorashvili's Oscar essentials.

These are just of the few great pieces featured in this issue. Happy reading!

Yours truly,
Laura Galante
Editor-in-chief

Hey, person holding this issue, it's the current Head Illustrator, Zuzanna. This may be the last issue featuring my work on the cover. Being a part of Scriptus was (and still remains) a crazy adventure, filled with great people, so let's end it with a few words in presidential style:

Scriptus is a great board. Unbelievable. Perhaps the best board ever. No fake news. Best headlines, and incredibly credible sources. Trust me. It's true.

So yes guys - we're looking for illustrators, so send us an artsy email (+coffee for the first person to identify the references).

Thanks & see you,
Z.

Ps. The cover was inspired by Ina Schebler's article "Of building walls and killing dreams". It's a strong one. I promise.



from right: first row: Tekla, Alma, Angela; second row: Liene, Zuzanna; third row: Laura; missing: Quinta

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Disclaimer:

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Once Upon A Time and Other Stories

- Eleonora Gelmetti
& Sam De Bruijn

Once upon a time, there was a sad girl called Ophelia. Her mum was Greek, but her whole family moved to Northern Europe when she was little. The girl, not the mum. Ophelia still doesn't know why they left the South: she doesn't remember much of it, yet feels always misplaced where she lives now. She does not really like the cold, nor the other kids in school. To be honest, she does not have many friends. Actually, she has a lot of friends, the thing is that other people cannot see them. It does not really matter, because she does not spend much time with other people anyway.

During most of her school-free-time she is at her grandfather's house, which is located in a small village on the edge of the cliff after the Fairy Forest. Of course, that is not the real name of the forest, but everyone in the hamlet calls it 'Fairy-Forest', and so does she. Ophelia spends hours every afternoon in the big library between the living room and the backyard. There, there is an assembly of new and very old pieces of a mechanism, a strange time-travelling machine that allows her to move across time and places, discover people, moments, lives. Her grandfather calls it 'books' and the movements 'stories'. Ophelia loves stories.

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This story begins in the middle of the story of Ophelia and many others.

One evening, in the middle of winter, it was snowing. Looking out of the window, Ophelia could see the world tinged white and becoming like a soft cloud upon which unicorns sleep. 'Come here' said the old man from the old armchair. She ran across the room and gently jumped on the legs of her grandfather and looked at him with her big green eyes, waiting for something. 'Well, honey, the snowflakes dancing and swirling in the air make me think of...' 'Of what, grandpa?' asked impatiently Ophelia. The man laughed and softly caressed her long hair.

Once upon a time, a far away land known for its fields of ice and infinite boundaries was ruled by a wise though spoilt king. Subjected to his rule the people living across the cold territory were, however, only exposed to the latter. As time went by, his spoilt behaviour began to cloud the objective image his people saw as they spoke his name, so to him this image was lost. The king found himself stuck in a reflection of his own making - a reflection he could escape if only he were able to look into eyes showing him a different self. For as long as his eyes reflected the image of a spoilt and worthless sovereign, he could never be more than just that. Through the years, the king of ice got accustomed to stares acknowledging his increasing spoilt and foolish behaviour: the person seen in the mirror had grown to match those stares until a difference existed no more. The wise monarch, so it seemed, was lost forever. It was a particularly snowy day when his unlucky faith changed. The king was set out to travel his land, heading to a northern city threatening to revolt against his reign, for the time of foolishness was over. But the weather made for a brutal journey: thousands of miles were still to be crossed as one of the wheels supporting the king's wagon sunk into deep snow. Continuing by foot, the king and his men were forced to stop and rest at the nearest village, so that their frozen limbs could be heated. On their path, a weak light belonging to a small barn appeared from the thick mist. The king signalled his men to go and demand refuge, for the king of ice desired a fire. The guards obeyed, and so did the small family as they welcomed the strangers. The king could barely see the couple and their young daughter for his eyes could not see beyond the red of the burning fire. He sat on the only free chair in the room, and, as the feeling in his toes returned, he spoke the only six words that held any real meaning to him: "I am the king of ice." No direct response came, for as the king's men had demanded refuge, this little information had already been shared

and processed. Instead, the young girl sneaked away from her father's hands and stood between the king and the fire. "I was reading, sitting on that chair, before you came in and brought the cold," she said with her arms crossed. The mother darted forward to stop her daughter from directing her eyes at the king, but a man belonging to the king's company surprisingly held her back with a small motion of the hand. This scene brought back days from the past when the king wasn't as arrogant and selfish – days assumed forever lost.

The king looked up into her big eyes and didn't know what to say. "I mean, sure you can sit there, but you could have at least asked" continued the girl. Then, without saying anything else, she took a book from the table and sat on the floor next to the king. "I can read here as well. Do you read?" The king could not avert his eyes from the child sitting cross-legged on cold tiles reading a book. The image of her big eyes did not leave his mind for they were eyes he had never seen before – at least not for a very, very long time. "It's okay if you don't read, I didn't use to neither", the girl said, "but then mom bought me this book and told me it was time to start." The king's voice was hoarse as he finally managed to speak. "I read," he said. The girl's eyes met his and, as she smiled handing him the book and telling him to read out loud, he understood why her eyes had captivated him. The eyes of innocence showed him an image of himself full of colour and kindness instead of one that was ferocious, selfish, and colourless. The eyes offering him a story to read, also offered him a story to tell – one of his own. And so, he did.

Once upon a time there was a man,
who had to be considered foolish
before he could accomplish
what being a man implies - for no one is born wise.
At birth, all humans are blank pages,
then, life provides them with challenges
that shape who they are going to be later.
For they have to take a step further into the unknown,
a chance is there for them to get lost
finding themselves alone in their own dark frost.
This is what sadly happened to the man,
who got overwhelmed by his power and selfishness.
Until that one day when he looked into the eyes of a child,
who reminded him why it is worth to be kind.

The king spoke until the fire was no bigger than the flame of a match. When he finished, while resting his eyes upon that dying flame, he heard the voice of the little girl asking, "So who is he?". He sighed.

After one year of travelling, the sovereign came back to his castle as a totally different person. On him there were still the scars of his past, as reminder that what one does never passes; yet he had really changed, a new brightness enlightening his eyes, one that would never extinguish. No one could explain the sudden change, and no one ever would. The secret of the sovereign transformation died with him.

Ophelia had listened to every word with bated breath and, when her grandfather stood silent, it was as if she had woken up in the middle of a dream. "What was the secret then?" asked she impatiently. "Well" answered the old man "no one knows". "There must be someone" she argued "the story cannot end like this". "You see, Ophelia, sometimes there is just no answer to certain questions and there is nothing you can do about it. Yet, there is something worth mentioning. There was a mysterious phrase that the king himself ordered to be carved in his grave:



For in two big gentle eyes
I found myself and understood,
that six vain words pronounced too often
made me forget what it means to be good."

Ophelia stood up and went to the window, staring at the dark snowy night. The only thing she could see was her reflection. Something caught her attention in the mirrored image of herself, something deep and limitless, yet so warm and sweet: her big eyes.

Illustration: Elizabeth Scippers

2017: The Year of the Being the Good Kind of Angry

-Andy O Daab

The last few weeks we have been reminded that nine years into AUC's existence, we still struggle with the diversity dimension of our community. Ever so often a debate is sparked and bitterly suffocated by the lack of platforms sustaining open and constructive dialogue. Whilst we celebrated our gender-neutral bathrooms, we ignored the fact that our feminist and LGBT facilities slowly disappeared. We ignored that our demographics continue to be white, middle class, and increasingly domestic. The singular victory of gender neutral bathrooms became the façade for a narrative without substance. Narratives are important because they frame the stories we are able to tell about ourselves. That is why changes of narratives or just a single word can trigger someone instantaneously.

I'm often being told, "Andy, leave it", when I go on one of my lectures about human rights because that crack in the narrative caught my attention. And you know what? I will not leave it. It makes me angry. And it is ok to be angry. Every time I'm out with my boyfriend I have to ask myself if I can hold his hand, if I can touch him, if I can kiss him, if I

can show him a sign of affection without either of us or our loved ones having to suffer any consequences. Because I grew up not knowing that who I am is normal and natural. The narrative of the time did not include space for my existence. And while the narrative for LGBT people has changed in this part of the world over the last decades, I still hear the word that describes my love, my prospects of happiness being used in a pejorative manner. Everyday I'm told that my love is worth a little less than everybody else's. Because your intention does not matter when you use the words. When you think it's 'so gay', when you think she's a 'bitch' or attribute weakness to women, when you joke about people of colour, or deliberately scratch us from your story, it does not matter if you didn't mean it derogatively or if one of us did not get offended. Because every time these words are used, every time our names are left out you deny us agency. You make us expect a little less of ourselves, of what we're worth, and of what we can achieve. You put down the people we love and the people that love us by degrading our worth as human beings.

ings. We are allowed to be angry. It is ok to be angry at injustice. We would not wish that injustice on anyone else. And this is why we are angry. We know you don't know. I don't know what it feels like to be a person of colour, I don't know what it feels like to be a woman, but I know what it feels like to be part of a group that experiences communal grievance. We need to accept that we cannot know. But that should never hinder us from understanding that we all strife for a common goal of a dignified life.

We have come a long way in our narratives and in who is able to shape them. But recent months have shown that many still insist on telling tales of timeslong past. We should never forget that the prosperity of this country, of any Western country, is largely if not predominantly based on extractions from people and territories that were not their proper. Many of the rights and liberties we enjoy today are privileges derived from the lives of others. It is about time that we at least acknowledge that fact. In times when the official narra-

tive does not reflect our realities, it is imperative that we press for concrete acknowledgement of our existence. To say our countries and societies are not black, not Muslim, not gay, not female, is to deny ourselves the right to exist. A narrative that enforces an inaccurate reality is poised to fail. If we are able to identify these inaccuracies in our societies at large, we should be able to identify them right outside our doorsteps.

We should use our anger and let it be a drive for kindness, inspiration, and the willingness to reach out. Anger draws from emotion and requires precision to be sustained. Anger means to care. Let us employ our anger and create platforms to constructively turn it into outcomes that help shape the narratives we want in our community. It is time we define diversity and the narrative we want to enforce it with. Next time someone gets angry at your words, know it is because they care. They care about you, them, and all of our positions in the story we tell. If 2016 was the year of realising things, 2017 should be the year of being the good kind of angry.



Debating Board

- Ellie MacLaughlin

In September, 2016, seven other first years and I joined together to revive AUC's Debate Society. Although the new board is still in a phase of experimentation, we have organized multiple events over the past few months. These include Drunk Debating, formal British Parliament-style debates, "Speed Debating," and open discussion nights. The Debating Board aims to appeal to AUC's diverse student body, creating a balance of formal and informal events with topics ranging from the ethics of Santa Claus to the place of "politically correct" culture in universities. Despite the silliness of some events, our ultimate mission is to encourage critical thinking and open discussions. After all, university is a perfect time for students to challenge pre-existing values and form educated, new opinions.

As an American living abroad during the Trump administration, the value of critical thinking is more apparent to me than it has ever been before. While his supporters' ignorance of minority groups' rights and needs seems obvious, many of his opponents (both at home and abroad) are also guilty of purposeful ignorance when they do not make an effort to understand pro-Trump perspectives. It goes without saying that the ever-increasing hostility between these rival groups is dangerous to all of American society. Despite the intricacy of this issue and its roots, respectful debates amongst average citizens can promote peace through understanding and empathy. This is because a good debater will always put themselves in their opponent's shoes and, for a moment, see the situation from the other person's perspective. Although they will probably still disagree, they will come to see the entire issue, whether it be the Trump administration or the ethics of Santa Claus, in a more critical, open-minded, and holistic light. The value of AUC's Debate Society and the value of debating in general lies in encouraging such changes in perspective.

Starting up a committee is challenging for a new, largely inexperienced board like ours, but I am proud of our accomplishments so far. The first month, we were presented with many difficult decisions that I personally felt unprepared to solve. How and when should we elect new board members? What sort of debating events will be the most successful? And how should we organize ourselves into manageable, logical positions within the board? After seemingly endless debates (ha ha), we finally organized ways to answer these questions. However, I believe that the board's success was not achieved in the most productive manner, as we mainly relied on trial-and-error and luck during the initial phases of our committee. Perhaps AUCSA could eventually provide advice for boards in a condensed, accessible format on the AUC Wiki page (wiki.myauc.nl) that addresses the sort of questions a new board like ours felt unprepared to answer. Although committee sovereignty sounds appealing, I see the value in more experienced AUC students providing leadership, organization, and event advertising tips to new boards.

As the Debate Society board continues into its second semester, we are hoping to fine-tune the structures of our most successful events while continuing to experiment with new ideas. For example, we are planning to start accompanying our open discussion and formal debate nights with presentations from experts in the topics we will be discussing/debating. This will make the events informative and ultimately more enriching. Our main goal moving forward is to attract as many students as possible to Debate Society. The more perspectives there are in the room, the more interesting the conversation will be. So, whether you are an expert debater or complete newbie, we encourage you to join us at our future events!



Of building walls and killing dreams

-Ina Schebler

“No, this is not Europe,” said Methkal Khalawi when I asked if he felt like he had entered Europe once his little boat had landed on the Greek island Chios. “It is a prison here. Not Europe,” he added. The first time the Syrian 27-year old had tried to cross the narrow strip of sea that lies between Turkey and Greece, their boat hit a rock and started to fill with water. They turned back to Turkey, “We almost died, but we survived,” said Khalawi, “The second time, a big event happened on the way. It was about three o’clock at night. When we were on our way, a big ship was coming. It was slow. We tried to pass it before it reached us, but it hit us, unfortunately.” One man fell in the water, but they pulled him back into the boat. During the incident Khalawi lost the bag that had carried all his belongings, including his papers and certificates, to the sea.

Refugee boats cross at night and do not have lights on board. The captain of that big ship had probably not seen them because they do their best to stay undetected. There are coast guards, police and military on the Turkish and Greek side respectively. There is a NATO ship that patrols between the island and the Turkish coast, and there is the European border control force Frontex with the same mission; they all try to stop the small boats crammed with people in orange life vests before they can cross the invisible line that runs through the sea and separates Turkey from Europe. Nobody in the refugee camps on Chios refers to Greece as Europe. Although Greece is a member state of the EU, in refugees’ minds, the Europe they want to reach starts somewhere north of Hungary. Greece is a prison for them and the European Union are the ones who built the walls around it.

Building walls to keep certain groups of people out is a widespread practice in Western politics. In his first week in office, the president of

the United States, Donald Trump, signed an executive order to start the process of building a wall along the border between Mexico and the US to stop illegal migration. Trump also ordered the suspension of the US refugee admissions system for 120 days, and blocked admission of Syrian refugees indefinitely. Additionally, people holding the nationality of Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Yemen and Syria were banned from entering the US for 90 days. The same document also lowered the total number of refugees who would be accepted in 2017 to a half (50,000), and sought to prioritize refugee claims on basis of religious persecution. Due to its discrimination against primarily Muslim nationals, this executive order became known as the Muslim Ban.

These decisions, among others the US President took, have pulled protesters into the streets all around the world and US courts have blocked central aspects of Trump’s executive order. Euronews talks of 700 rallies worldwide against Trump’s politics on his first day of inauguration alone. In addition, Europeans are protesting in solidarity with Americans against racism and for equality, against Islamophobia and for inclusion, against sexism and for individual rights.

When I asked Mohammed Yazji, a Syrian holding refugee status in Germany, what he thought of Trump’s first week in office, he said, “I like him. He does what he says and he says what he does. All the other politicians hate Muslims as well, nobody wants to take refugees in, and they all close their borders. At least, Trump is honest.”

Khalawi arrived on Chios in July 2016. He is still in Greece, sleeping in a tent covered in snow in the north of Greece. He is recovering from pneumonia and talking of suicide. Before he stepped on the boat close to Turkish Izmir, he was a student of electronic engineering and English literature. When he stepped off the boat on Greek Chios, he became a mere refugee who would not even receive refugee status. He is the wrong gender, the wrong age, the wrong family status, the wrong religion, and he came at the wrong time. The EU-Turkey Statement took effect on March 20, 2016 and effectively reduced border crossing between Turkey and Greece. According to the UNHCR, 173,500 refugees arrived by sea to Greece in 2016. 151,500 of those came in the first three months, that is, before the EU-Turkey Statement took effect. Anyone who arrived after March 20, was forced to apply for asylum in Greece,



although almost none of the migrants wants to stay there. Most of them want to go to Germany, Sweden or other countries where they see a good future for themselves and their families.

Greece is caught in a financial crisis and has already been unable to cope with the refugee influx while they were only flowing through the country to continue their journey northwards. Now, the EU assigned a leading part to its member state at the periphery of the EU: Greece is “where we store the refugees, to put it bluntly,” said Alexander Hirsch, a German volunteer on Chios. For the EU, it is convenient to contain asylum applicants on islands like Chios, as natural sea walls make the islands secure prisons. Anyone who does not have a Syrian nationality is very likely to be rejected right away and deported back to Turkey. However, even Syrians get rejected. A single man like Khalawi who is above the age of 18 and not Kurdish is almost definitely going to be sent back. Who gets the letter informing them of their rejection usually turns to smugglers to help them leave the island. Then, they attempt to cross the border to Macedonia and from there through Serbia and Hungary illegally.

In order to avoid that, European countries attempt to seal their borders. In 2015, Macedonia erected fences along its border with Greece, Hungary built a 500 km long razor-wire fence along its southern borders as well, and even Austria constructed fences along its borders with Slovenia, both Schengen countries. While the refugee crisis turned quiet in Western Europe and media turned the spotlight on Trump, every night more boats filled with refugees arrive on the Greek shore, more people sleep in flooded camps and under

snow-covered tarpaulins, and Khalawi loses a bit more of his hope to ever live a normal life again. 1,864 people have crossed the sea to Greece in 2017 so far. If sea crossings to Spain and Italy are counted as well, the number rises to 12,300.

While Europeans protest Trump’s policies, they should not forget that his policies are not too different from what the EU is doing. It does not help Europe to only unite against the new enemy Trump, as long as we do not connect the issues that he makes visible through his blunt actions to the challenges we are facing ourselves. The EU might be responsible for not meeting their duty in protecting refugees’ rights, but we are part of the EU, so we are responsible for Khalawi’s plight as well.

While Trump wants Mexico to pay for his wall, the EU lets refugees pay with their lives. Many of them told me they would have preferred to lose their lives in a bomb attack or to be shot by a sniper than to die slowly in Europe’s refugee camps. In January, the UNHCR cited five cold-related deaths of refugees in yet another call to the EU for action. The ones who do not die merely exist in inhumane conditions that are an embarrassment for the EU, which markets itself as a developed entity holding human rights up high.

Ina Schebler has spent three weeks volunteering and conducting research in refugee camps on Chios and wrote her capstone on the EU-Turkey Statement’s consequences.

Against:

- Natalia
Dovgalenok

Here at AUC, fluency in two or more languages, as well as a desire to learn more, is a norm. The compulsory two or three language courses are usually taken with enthusiasm or at least, a smile. The fact that those courses are only offered during the intensives, however, is often frowned upon. There are several reasons for students' doubts about such a system.

The courses are supposed to be intense, and therefore we have 3-4 hours of classes four days a week and a test every Monday or Friday. With the lack of time for digesting the piles of material, comes the need for blind rote learning. Students spend more time planting the necessary vocabulary into their short-term memories in order to prepare for an exam, rather than using that vocabulary. As a result, the information does not stay in one's head for long enough, unless they continue practicing the language throughout the rest of the semester.

That leads to another point. The huge time gap between language intensives, which can be up to a year, causes students to forget the material they had learnt in the first-level course of the language before they even start the second one. This especially applies to those at the beginner levels. If students are not provided with an opportunity to practice or study the language outside of AUC in between intensives, they might find themselves unable to follow the material of a higher-level course, which they are obliged to take.

The practice of teaching a language intensively is not uncommon, but usually short several-week courses are given as a proficiency exam preparation or in combination with an experience in the language-speaking country. At AUC, neither is the case unless students decide to take Dutch. If language courses were offered during 16-week periods, it could give students a chance to attain a more profound knowledge of the language and avoid stagnation in the learning process.

Is the intensive period suitable for learning a language?

For:

- Laura
Galante

While it may be a common argument that the intensive period leads to information cramming in the short time-span available for a language course, that subject is the only one in focus, and so there is more time to dedicate to it as opposed to a 16-week period. During a 16-week period, one might be too preoccupied with subjects that are more relevant to their majors to give full attention to a language course. If it were to be placed among three other courses, a language could thus become the last priority for a student and therefore result in less efficient learning.

In addition, one can dedicate an entire month to only one subject, and one that is completely different from any others taken during the normal semester. This may result in being even more motivating for the student, who is usually busy writing lengthy research essays or cramming a great amount of theory. Not to mention group presentations. A language course provides a break from all of that by allowing the student to study in a more relaxed setting and focusing exclusively on comprehension, speaking and writing. It comes as a good solution for those who do not enjoy multitasking and whose multiple deadlines can result in stress. So, in the end, a student could have even more time to complete an assignment or studying for a language course.

One month might just be enough for those who would rather differentiate their studies with an alternative learning task that does not require cramming theory. Although information might be stored in short-term memories, it does not mean that it has to be difficult to pick up again during the intensive following the 26-week period. Teachers always go through a recap of what was taught during the previous intensive, thereby refreshing concepts that were temporarily left to saturate in the brain during the information-packed semester. So, overall, intensive period language courses should be seen more as an opportunity to blow some steam and enjoy the language at hand.



source: berend quest.nl

Quantity over quality?

- Ishvar
Lalbahadoersing

15 March is not a regular day; it is not only the birthday of the famous French soccer player Paul Pogba or 2061 years since Julius Caesar died, no on the 15th of March 2017 the Dutch citizens have the right to choose their potential parliament. Just like any other country the Dutch fear for the extreme right wing parties. Though many people do not know yet what to vote for, it is a hard choice. In America, for instance, options are relatively limited while in the Netherlands people are overloaded with different political parties. With the years the number of parties one can vote for has increased to 28. Why are there so many parties? What do they stand for? And do they not overlap?

Currently there are too many small parties that will be highly likely not to become part of parliament anyways. The thought behind smaller parties can be found in the Dutch electing system, unlike the USA every vote counts as one in the Netherlands. This is because there are no district points or anything close to that. Because every vote counts as much smaller parties have a relatively bigger chance to get more votes compared to a system where district wise the biggest parties are chosen.

So this is the reason that there are many parties, but what do these parties stand for. There are many parties with only a few points on their agenda, these are mostly the smaller parties they are the so called 'one issue parties'. They only focus on a limited amount of point, and is usually focused on only one target group. Their aim is to get as many votes as possible from that target group that can identify with those concrete points.

Examples in Dutch politics are 'JEZUS LEEFT' (Jesus is alive), 'Niet Stemmers' (the non-voters) and 'Mens en Spirit' (Human and Spirit). These parties seem so specific that I question if they ever realized that they will never actually influence politics. It seems just like some speeches from Donald Trump that these parties are either a joke or a social experiment. They are a point of attention in the politics.

It is on the one hand super typical that in a liberal country like the Netherlands all these smaller parties with quite bald statements are running for the elections. But on the other hand this makes me question two very important things. First, have the usual Dutch parties failed so much that these types of parties are founded and getting more and more votes. Apparently there is a need for it because otherwise they would not have felt the urge to start a party if the points are already covered by other, bigger parties. Second, is the Dutch society so scattered and confused that options like these need to start existing to offer them a right party to vote for. Have the people lost so much faith, hope and trust in the regular bigger parties? This is a very concerning question, because it is important that the Dutch citizens are not losing their trust in common parties.

All in all, I hope that these smaller parties do not influence the quality of the elections. That regardless the many options people will find a party to identify with. It would be almost impossible not to find any. At 15 March Dutch citizens will vote, it will be a crucial day, but I hope that the quantity of the parties will not influence the quality.



Studying law at AUC: What's the deal?

by Lubomir Leegwater

To a certain extent, if you have passionately chosen a field or a profession to educate yourself in, AUC might not be the best choice of university. This is the situation with law, because when you graduate from AUC, you obtain a bachelor of Liberal Arts and Sciences and not a law degree, a so-called LLB (Legum Baccalaureus). I came to AUC because I was not sure what I wanted to pursue, and at the end of my first year, I had made my mind up about going for law. Unfortunately, I learned later that this came with complications, such as not being granted an LLB, which now seems to cause problems in master program applications and future law prospects. Admittedly, I put myself in the position where I am now, by choosing this university. That being said, in hindsight, I am disappointed in the fact that AUC does not inform its prospective students of what the career prospects are with a law-oriented diploma, or rather what these prospects are not. I can imagine similar circumstances apply to pre-med students, as both law, medicine and possibly more professional fields such as engineering require achievement of professional qualifications which, to make matters more complex, usually differ per country. It took me quite some time to figure that out, and perhaps like students of those similar fields at AUC, I am not in a great position, also given the fact that law qualifications differ per country. However, I do not regret the choice: after all, it is here that I discovered that I wanted to do law. So, it seems current 2017 graduates like me (and alumni-AUC law students) are in a bit of a tricky situation.

Generally speaking, the way the legal system in many European countries works, particularly in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, is that those wishing to work as a jurist or lawyer need to have a law degree (LLB), law master's degree (LLM) and, depending on the chosen specific legal profession, professional training. Thus, since AUC law students are not given an LLB when they graduate, they are put in a position of disadvantage and need to spend more time obtaining such a degree after or during AUC. This is especially a problem if you consider that many LLM degrees require its applicants to have an LLB or a bachelor's degree, with a focus on law.

For students who choose law but also are doing two tracks or a minor, this could prove to be problematic. Enrolling in two bachelors (AUC and a Dutch law bachelor) at once, or taking extra Dutch law courses at the UVA or the VU is, of course, a possibility that circumvents this problem. However, this was something I had to discover on my own from my fellow students, rather than being officially informed by AUC. Additionally, and unfortunately, for those who prefer to stick to AUC, the story is more cumbersome.

Luckily, AUC has arranged for a so-called "schakeljaar", or switch year, for those wishing to pursue an LLB in WDutch law at the Open University. This allows students to obtain an LLB in one year, as opposed to the regular 3 years it would take for such a degree at the UVA, for example. However, some students, including myself, are hesitant to enrol as most of the courses are online and the tuition fee is costly, around 7000 euros.

Given that AUC is a relatively "young" university, some things are still being refined, including the law track itself, which, in my opinion, could contain more practical and concrete law courses, but also outlining the career prospects for graduating law track students. The Open University track is a step in the right direction and a safety net that Dutch law students can resort to. Nonetheless, it is my experience and opinion that we as law students must put in considerably more effort to pursue our future goals than most AUC students, even those who choose a track that in the end will require them to achieve professional qualifications. This is because, whereas engineering qualifications may differ per country, law qualifications are entirely based on the subject matter, the national law. Especially in the European Union, qualifications are easier to be recognized between countries, which is much easier for fields not depending on location, such as law,



which would require extensive re-education. Writing many emails, attempting to individually organize a one year switch year at other universities, looking into combining LLM programs and LLB courses to earn both diplomas are all possible solutions that we have considered. I would jokingly say that we have to fight for our right to study law, but unfortunately, it is quite accurate.

So, it seems that the keyword for the future of fellow AUC law students, intending to practice or study law in Europe or beyond, is uncertain. This uncertainty is something I and fellow law students find cumbersome: there is rarely a clear-cut answer, perhaps because we are trying to make the inherently rigid system of legal academics more flexible for us to fit in it. Recently, AUC and its management have begun to assist with our individual efforts, particularly by trying to help us enrol in "fast-tracked" versions of LLB programs at other universities, which should be cheaper and more qualitative in terms of educational value, given that we will actually have lectures from lecturers in the flesh. I can see that AUC does mean well with these endeavours and I can only hope that they will prove fruitful before we graduate in July, so that there will be more attractive options for us and for future AUC graduates to exploit.

A Glimpse at the AUC TEDx Pitch Night

- Diana Ghidanac



Source: TEDxAUCCollege

On Wednesday, February 15th, the TEDxAUC-College team organized Pitch Night, an annual event that precedes the main TEDx event held in March. Pitch Night provides people the chance to pitch an idea in three minutes in hopes of getting selected to present at the main TEDx event. The audience, along with a panel of judges, cast their votes following all of the pitches. In the past there was only one lucky speaker, but this year both the judges and the audience's choices were picked to go forward.

Attendees for the night included familiar AUC faces, guests from outside Science Park, and of course, the official team. The stage was set with the hallmark red round carpet and the bold TEDx logo. The red curtains opened and the audience was welcomed by the host for the night, Vittoria Dentes, also chair of TEDxAUCCollege.

"[This year's edition has a personal touch: to Disconnect, step back, think, and finally reconnect with ourselves...' mentioned Dentes as she described this year's theme to the audience: (Dis)Connect. She regarded it as a crucial step in achieving innovation; the speakers of the night were meant to deliver ideas for novel solutions to entrenched problems.

Just over half of the speakers consisted of current and past AUC students, graduate students, and those from outside Amsterdam. Voting for the best speaker of the night was a difficult decision, but as the final pitch concluded, the choice seemed unanimous. The audience's top pick was current AUC student Saga Norrby, while the judges' pick was AUC Alumni Carolin Vahar-Matiar.

Norrby's pitch was one that reflected the overarching problem facing society today. She expressed the fundamental reasons that are inhibiting us from solving global issues, which is our tendency '[to create a hierarchy between our problems, when they actually form a web]'. In response to this final sentence of her pitch were feelings and sounds of various forms of "amen". "It was a topic worth speaking about as [I realized] that many people have an intrinsic understanding of how all things connect," Norrby mentioned after her pitch. "It seemed so obvious once you hear it but we don't usually act according to that... we need to be reminded, so that's what I set out to do."

Prior to Norrby was Vahar-Matiar, who emphasized that even if you are someone who donates, this will not have a grand impact in solving poverty. She began by instructing everyone to close their eyes and imagine the commonly-known advertisements that ask to donate money to starving children. Her pitch further elaborated that these advertisements don't give us a good glimpse of what's actually happening. Additionally, it guilt-trips us, which is what viewers don't want to feel. Her direct course of action was to disconnect from the ads, the fundraising and the guilt-induced feelings, and rather consider other small steps we can take to alleviate poverty.

After six speakers, the event hit an intermission. People were already wondering who would get to move on, despite having three speakers left, two of which are Vahar-Matiar and Norrby. The opener of the night, Nicolai Thomasius warmed up the audience by questioning the pursuit of happiness in our everyday lives. Although Thomasius didn't



consider being the first presenter as a total advantage, "It feels great to get it over with, but it's really nerve wracking because you can [never be sure] what the audience expects," he mentioned during the break.

Next, Klaudia Klonowska, a second year AUC student asked the audience whether they would travel to North Korea. Approximately 30% of the room raised their hands in approval. In short, Klaudia's main message was about the need to bridge the two cultures together, and break up our negative perceptions about North Korea.

Stephen Dradenya's pitch, "Knowledge To Change Life" was about the need to change the minds of youth to become more self-sustaining. Evi Sifaki, a first year AUC student, said that she really enjoyed Stephen's pitch because she could relate to it on a more personal level, "I understood what he was saying because the same thing is happening in Greece, but [it's unfortunate] when you have a strong message but can't find the right words to say it."

Ruben Boyd's "Disconnect to Connect" pitch described his experience taking psychedelic drugs and recommended it, 'to reconnect with ourselves, and gain a more holistic view of the world.'. Shortly after, Dentes made it clear that TEDx does not support the intake of hard drugs.

The last AUC student was Philip Hartout, who spoke from personal work experience and discussed the steps we need to take to help curing Alzheimer's. "We need to induce a paradigm shift to foster progress..." One way we could go about this, according to Hartout, is to construct a business framework not just for Alzheimer's, but also used to help other aspects in healthcare.

Overall, the work that the TEDx team put into the organization of the night was well-recognized. The turnout for the event was around 50 people, with the majority of the room being filled with AUC students. Two years ago, Pitch Night was held at Pakhuis De Zwijger, and the main event taking place at AUC instead. It wasn't until last year that the TEDx team decided to switch the locations and have Pitch Night at the academic building instead, as it was a good networking opportunity for AUC students. Last year, the main event was held at Bimhuis. Previous TEDx member Lance Bosch said that the objective for Pitch Night was to have a 'home grown talent kind of feel...the main event should be grander and should take AUC kids outside of the bubble'.

Following the announcement of the winners, the entire TEDx team took the stage to announce the location of this year's TEDxAUCCollege event. This was revealed to be at Pathé Tuschinski in a short video, a location which, like earlier ones, is unprecedented in TEDxAUCCollege's history.

West Coast is Best Coast: The LA Street- food Concept to Taste in Amster- dam

by Diana Ghidanac

If you haven't been living here for very long you'll soon realize that 90% of the weather in Science park consists of rain, wind, and grey skies. But that doesn't mean that you have to sulk in your room about it or hibernate in blankets with tea and your favourite series - actually that sounds pretty great right about now. However, there are a few things that make a short bike ride through the unbearable weather all worth it once you've arrived and have had a bite of your fresh Carnita taco. We're talking about food after all, and if you haven't guessed it we're taco-ing about Taco Tuesdays in Oost.

Taco Tuesdays is a concept derived from Best Coast Taqueria, a restaurant that aims to serve LA street food with a strong focus on Mexican, Asian, and American flare. Its main kitchen is currently located at Café Struik on Rozengracht, but once a week you can find them serving up on the other side of the city, much closer to our cozy dorms. Things you can expect on your taco-filled menu are: fried chicken, Carnitas, sweet potato, black bean, fish tacos - they've done it and got it all. Upon my visit at Film Theatre and Café Kriterion, located nearby the Roeterseiland campus, I had the black bean tacos with coriander, red cabbage, and Queso Fresco cheese, with a side of guac of course. You should always order a side of guac. It may not have been the absolute BEST taco I've ever had in my

life (my hometown does a banging job of that, s/o to my Toronto homies), but it does scale up on the list of some of the better things I've had in Amsterdam. What I do appreciate about them however is that everything is made fresh on the spot - and service is quick! Also they're tacos for 2 euros, what have you got to lose?

I'd recommend you to go for the 4 for 6 euros order. These tacos may not size up to a burrito but with the larger platter, chips and guac, and good company, I would say Taco Tuesdays is quite gezellig. Let's not forget that by having it at Kriterion, you get a variety of options for drinks, which also pairs well with your taquitos.

Best Coast isn't just a connoisseur in food bundled up in tortillas, but they've also done weeks of Mexican kapsalons, kimchi and fried chicken, holy nachos, burgers, and the list goes on. Maybe you're from LA, have been in Cali on exchange, or can't stop reminiscing about the appetizing fish tacos you enjoyed on your summer trip to the west coast: Taco Tuesdays can help give you with a quick fix of summer flavours and with a little bit of a west coast vibe. Turn it into a fun date night, catch up with an old pal, or as a "must-see" for your friend visiting from abroad, it's something new to do and see and will definitely have you forgetting about this somber weather. Catch yo' tacos at Kriterion and Café Struik every Tuesday from 18:00 onwards, or have a go at what else Best Coast can offer you from Tuesday-Saturdays 18:00-21:30 at Struik.



Dear Evan Hansen A New Musical

- Pieter Buis

When you're falling in a forest
And there's nobody around
Do you ever really crash
Or even make a sound?
Will I ever make a sound?
(excerpt from the song *Waving Through a Window*)

Dear Evan Hansen is a musical that, like so many less-known productions today, falls outside of the loud-and-proud conceptualization of musicals that is still pervasive among audiences. Main themes of *Dear Evan Hansen* are teen angst, depression, suicide and, on the up-side, family. Since you won't be seeing a live production in the Netherlands anytime soon, you can experience the show through the soundtrack recorded with the original cast. The album debuted at No. 8 on the Billboard top 10 and is a tonal and compositional treat for the ears and the heart.

A note before I get into the show: I'm aware that musicals are not a popular choice of study or party music. Nevertheless, musical theatre is a beautiful and accessible form of art that is very much worth the time investment. If this is your first time listening to a cast album, there are some obstacles to overcome: you'll have to get used to the switching between talking and singing and talk-singing and to the struggle of figuring out which voice belongs to which character. However, after listening multiple times, a soundtrack can become like an old friend you can always return to for comfort and encouragement.

The title character from *Dear Evan Hansen* is a socially anxious teen in senior year of high school who deals with his feelings by writing himself letters. One of these letters ends up in the hands of the school freak, Connor Murphy, who commits suicide a few days later. Connor's desperate parents approach Evan, having found the letter and misinterpreting it as a sign that Connor and Evan were secretly best friends. Evan doesn't know how to let the parents down and starts an elaborate (and at times hilarious) lie to make the friendship believable. In the process Evan becomes closer with the Murphy's; he finds a surrogate dad in Mr. Murphy and the love of his life in Connor's sister Zoe. Nevertheless, the truth has to be revealed and when it does, it shatters all except for one thing, which I won't spoil. When I first saw Evan get lost in this endless lie, I cringed a lot; the longer he waited to tell the truth, the worse he would end up. Connor's family doesn't seem worth all the trouble because we never really get to know them; their Requiem sounds hollow because they hardly knew their own son and brother, and neither does the audience. Evan's two friends have singular identities (not wholly implausible, considering this is high school) and his mom is often at work. The only person that steps into crystal clear focus is Evan himself. He has five delicate solo numbers that create the character from the ground up and the awkward tenor of Ben Platt (from *Pitch Perfect*) brings them hauntingly close to home. If Evan can get a person as disliked and unwanted as Connor to be remembered, that means something to all of us, right? "When you're broken on the ground, you will be found" is the first act climax. When it's sung by Evan, a broken person who desperately needs it to be true, it's very hard to keep your eyes dry.



La La Oscars i.e. Essentials Before the Day Comes

- Tekla
Tevdorashvili

One year from #OscarsSoWhite, there are seven people of color nominated in the main acting categories, not to mention Viola Davis, who is creating history with her third nomination. For those of you unaware, Davis is the first black woman to earn this many. Moreover, Moonlight (2016), a film about contemporary African American life in today's society, is nominated for 'Best Picture' and can be considered as "the only film that's likely to rival the 14-nominations juggernaut of La La Land for best picture" (Thompson). La La Land (2016) itself is an unusual film to be nominated in the category. In its entire eighty-nine years of existence, the Oscars have witnessed only 10 musicals winning 'Best Picture' nomination and something tells me one of the biggest films of the year - La La Land (2016) will be the eleventh, 14 years after the last musical - Chicago (2002).

The movie that broke the record for most Golden Globe wins ever by a single film, is also owner of a record-tying 14 Oscar nominations. Not to mention once again the pair Emma Stone and Ryan Gosling (La La Land's main characters) who also deserved nominations in main acting categories and arose as early favorites after winning Golden Globes. Concerning directors, Damien Chazelle, La La Land's director, has been a strong favorite long before the Golden Globes and Directors Guild of America Awards, but these wins reinforced his Oscar nomination.

In the history of the Oscars, Kathryn Bigelow, who produced The Hurt Locker (2008), a film focused on white men in the most male-oriented environment - the war zone, is the only female director to ever win in 'Best Director' category. Although this film does challenge a stereotypical image of what films women can and should direct, it leaves a poignant array of questions about the ideology circulating how we understand what rules and ideologies govern those behind the screen. So, it doesn't come as a surprise that there

is not a single female director nominated this year.

However, two films out of the 10 nominees in foreign-language and documentary categories are directed by acclaimed directors Ava DuVernay, director of 13th (2016), and Maren Ade, director of Toni Erdmann (2016). Although both films were included in Top 20 films of 2016 created by Rolling Stones, referring to Toni Erdmann as "The year's best and most brilliant foreign-language film" (Travers), their chances of winning in either of the categories are not very high, since voters usually sympathize with already well-established directors or sentimental/nostalgic films.

It is also important to touch upon topics such as how Deadpool (2016) didn't deserve a single nomination when they launched the special 'Oscar campaign' or why Suicide Squad (2016) was even nominated. To be fair, since the film is nominated for 'Makeup and hairstyling', some might say that the nomination is well deserved, but what about Deadpool (2016)? They had fairly good makeup.



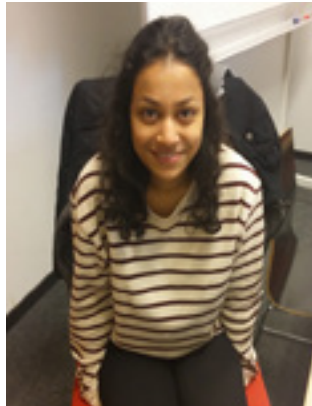
The Oscars are developing step by step, but still, there are many unsolved issues, which will hopefully change for good. Questions for now are - Does Moonlight (2016) have a shot against the winner of seven Golden Globes - La La Land (2016)? and will Viola Davis finally win a well-deserved Oscar? We will find out on February 26.

We Asked You

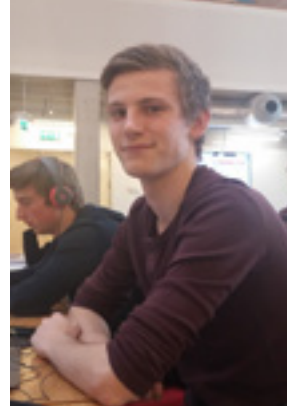
Where do you see AUC in 100 years?



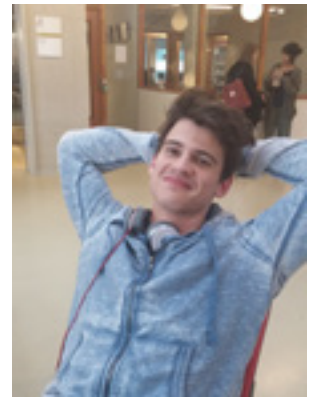
Elio Monaco, Third Year: probably the same place it was before.



Antara Bhattacharjee, Third Year: At the bottom of the ocean...in a good way.



Timen Vierling, First Year: A high tech place!



Johan Friedsted, Second Year: In my grave.



Natalia Dovgale-nok, Third Year: In a bubble under the North Sea.



Stefan Plug, Third Year: I hope I don't see AUC in 100 years!



Rijk Willers, First Year: AUC will still exist in 100 and there will be a good interaction with other university colleges.

Peppi Vanaanen, Second Year: I believe there will be great destruction around the world so I think AUC will have no prominent role in society at that time.



Augustine Hacques, First Year: I guess as one of the major liberal arts and sciences institutions...or completely gone.

Marin Sinclair, First Year: instead of actual teachers there will be robots and you don't have to type, you can just think.