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about

Published three times annually, [proof] is Palo Alto High School's fine arts and photography magazine, working to showcase Paly's vibrant and diverse artistic community, covering a variety of styles and backgrounds.

from the editors

Welcome back photographers and artists! We are excited to present the latest issue of [proof] magazine. With our fingers on the pulse of the cultural zeitgeist, we have chosen to highlight calls for change, here and around the world. On our cover is a protest in Argentina for economic policy. Closer to home, we have explored Palo Alto High School student voices and experiences in "Science Comes Alive" by senior Katie Firtch and "Capturing the Crowds" by Mike Zhao. We also have some exclusive tips for you from experienced sports photographer Daniel Garepis-Holland, who has spent years courtside and poolside covering the latest in Paly sports. Spirit Week is also a draw, full of bombastic color and creative design. Flip through to see this year's floats during the sawing, painting and polishing process. Taylor Swift's album "Midnights" made history, clinching the top ten spots on the charts. Madelyn Castro explores the juxtaposition between the boundary-pushing anachronisms and fresh modern touches in the album's aesthetic. So what are you waiting for? Flip to the next page and enjoy our newest issue!

— arati, annelise & madelyn



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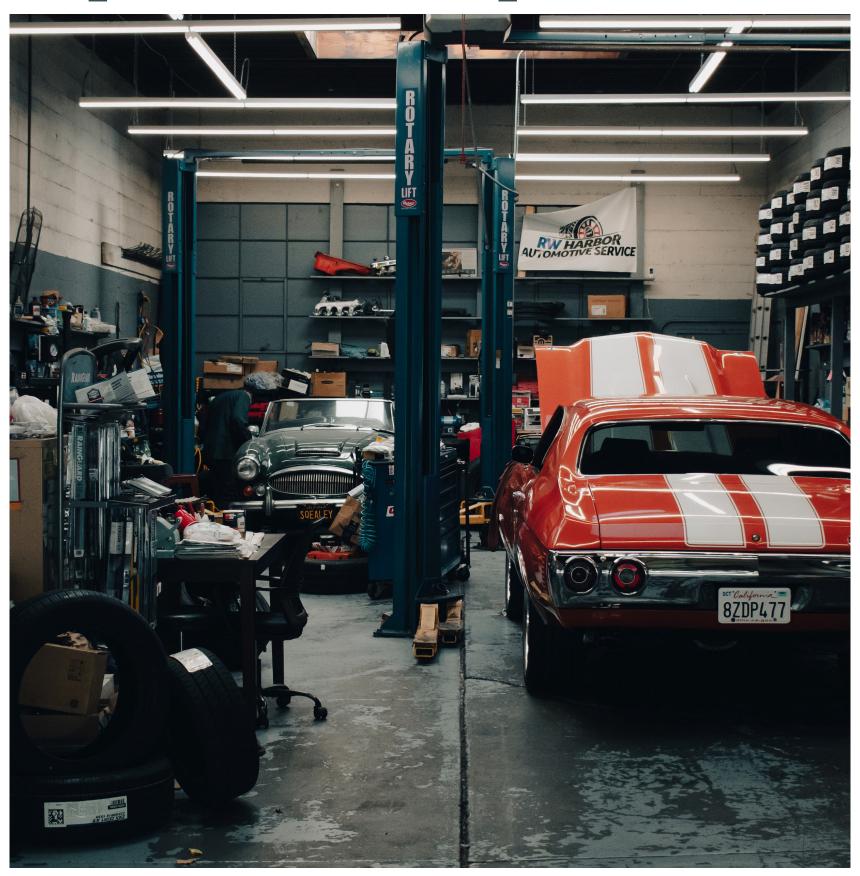
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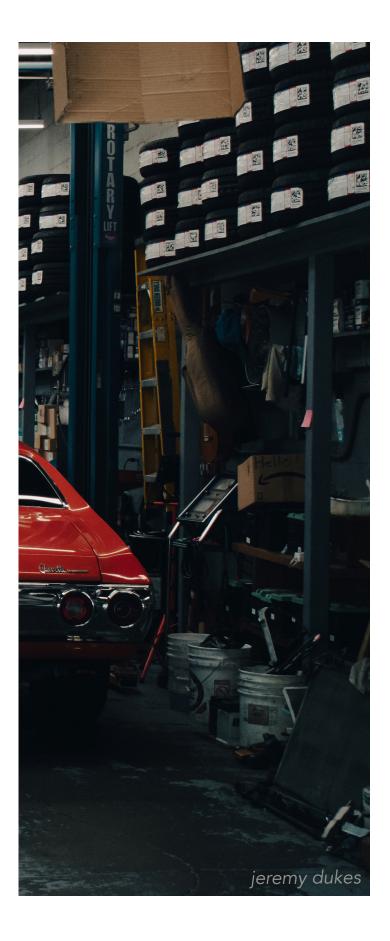
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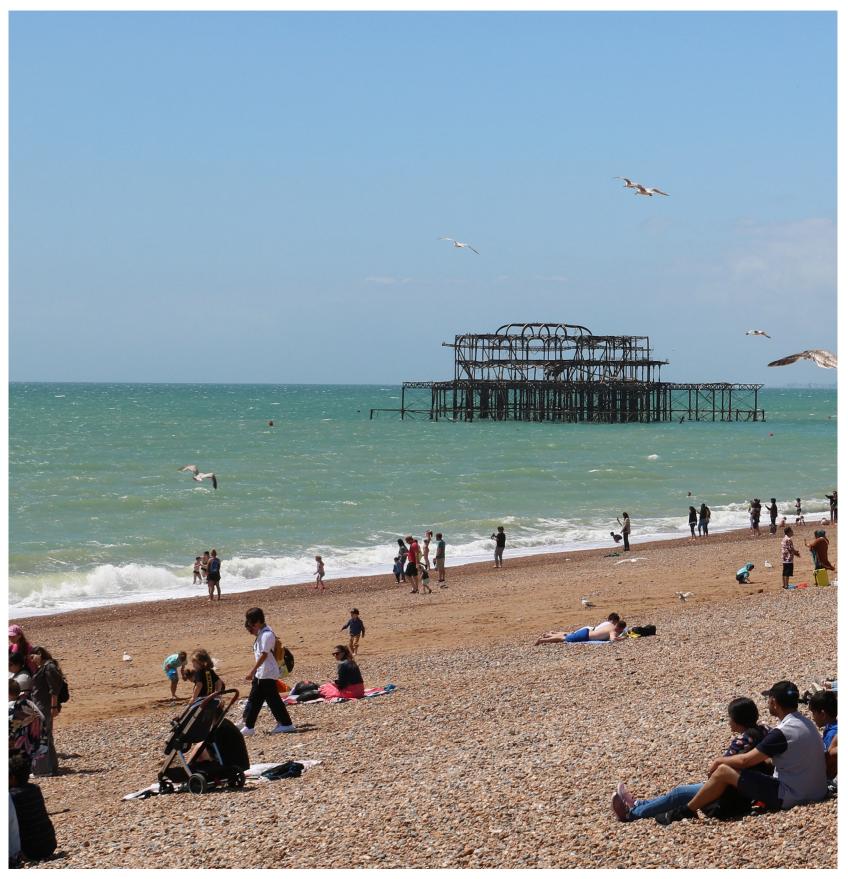


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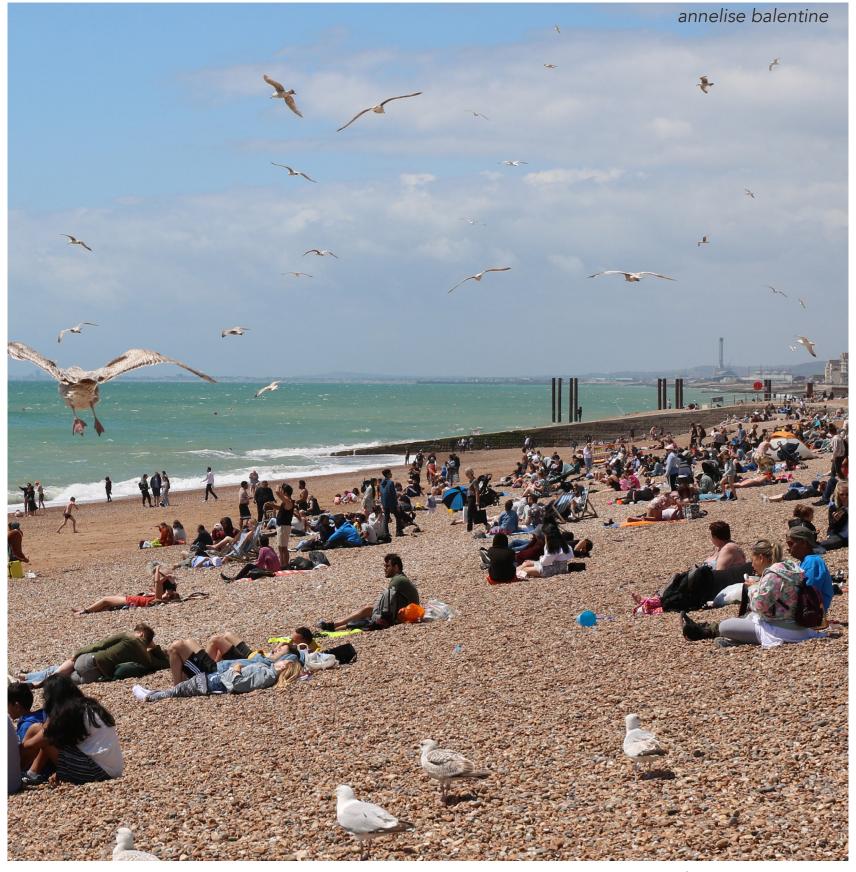
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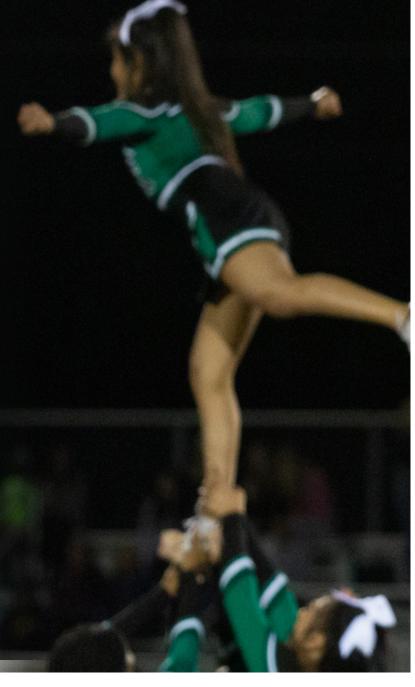
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sports photography tips

veryone's seen history's iconic sports moments captured through the lens — Muhammad Ali standing over a defeated Sonny Liston, Michael Jordan's many impressive dunks from the free-throw line, Maradona's famous Hand of God, Odell's unbelievable catch, or one of Babe Ruth's many black-and-white homers. But have you ever considered what it takes to be the person behind the camera who captures these special moments?

Growing up, I'd taken many introductory photography classes, but it wasn't until I joined The Paly Voice in my sophomore year that I was introduced to sports photography. I fell in love with it because I enjoyed all of its aspects - understanding the technology, being a part of the action, creating school spirit, and being able to find a creative outlet. There's something special about capturing the action of a fastpaced Friday football game under the lights, or a wire-tight volleyball game that has gone to five sets and left everyone on the edge of their seats.

Sports photography is a great way to be involved in your school community and meet both athletes and other photographers. For those who are more athletically inclined, you'll have a leg up when it comes to building your skills, as you already understand typical player and team mechanics, and for the couch potatoes among us, an opportunity to be involved in the magic of sports without the blood, sweat and tears.



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Paly varsity girls' volleyball outside hitter Izzy Pei helps out on defense during a match against crosstown rivals Gunn. When it comes to focal length, the choice depends on the sport. For larger-field sports such as football, soccer, or field hockey, choose telephoto lenses such as a 70-200mm or 135mm. For court sports such as volleyball or tennis, a shorter-distance lens like a 24-70mm lens would also work. Some photographers even carry multiple cameras with a long-distance and short-distance lens mounted on separate cameras, switching when play moves from one side of the field to the other.

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Running back Audon Forgus gains some yardage during his team's playoff match. It's crucial to set your shutter speed to the correct value to make sure you capture every moment without blur or noise. For beginner photographers, choose the S or TV mode, which allows you to choose your shutter speed while allowing the camera to auto-adjust other settings, and set your shutter speed to 1/500s. Once you've taken a few photos, zoom in to check if they are grainy or blurry. For grainy photos, change to a wider aperture lens or lengthen your shutter speed, and for blurry ones, shorten your shutter speed.



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There's never a shortage of action during a high-intensity football matchup. Many sportswriters and photographers focus on offense, but impressive defense is just as important. Focus in on a perfectly timed sliding tackle in soccer, a last-ditch pancake or dive in volleyball, or a clutch block in a tight basketball game, or an impressive save by a hockey goaltender.

From last year, Paly varsity soccer midfielder Mariana Kessinger holds off an opposing defender during a league game. Whether behind helmets or not, faces play an important role in gathering the emotions of a sports game. Avoid taking photos of players' backs, and instead focus on telling a story through their facial expressions. Are they grunting through a crunching tackle? Smiling after scoring a goal? Frowning with frustration after giving up an easy point? Research shows that readers' eyes are immediately drawn to faces when they look at a photo it's part of human nature and allows us to connect.



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Celebrating local artists of all ages

they can stick within and we wanted to really challenge them to make really small work or really big work," Foley said.

The challenge, although difficult for some artists, allowed for experimentation with canvas sizes outside of their comfort zone with many choosing to work small.

"A lot of people were intimidated to work big but everyone can work small," said Foley, "when you work on a 6 by 6 and you're used to working on a 20 by 24... you're paying attention to... what's important and what's not."

One such artist was Natya Chandrasekar, a sophomore at Castilleja, who had two of her canvas embroideries chosen for this year's exhibit. She was first introduced to embroidery during her art class at Castilleja in which she and her classmates embroidered tote bags. She rediscovered the art form during online learning while searching for a way to pass time. Over time, her focus shifted from embroidering totebags and other accessories to canvas.

"[Using canvas] felt really appealing to me because, instead of decorating something, [embroidery] could be an artwork itself," said Chandrasekar.

For Chandrasekar, the slow unconscious motions of embroidery also provide stress relief from the daily life of being a student.

"With embroidery you don't really get to plan too much of it out because it's just how the string moves so it's nice just starting on it and seeing where it goes," said Chandrasekar.

Her works chosen for the gallery are both bright landscapes; a lakeside view with mountains against a colorful sunset and a vast field of blue hued flowers. However, the colorful and textured nature of her art requires patience to achieve the final piece.







"I have to trust the process because, at the start, it doesn't look very good but then as you add more layers and colors it becomes so much brighter and so much prettier," said Chandrasekar.

Despite being a student, the league gives Chandrasekar the ability to present her artwork for people of all ages to enjoy.

"As a student you wouldn't really think that I would have this opportunity and a lot of people here are much older and they have more experience but it's nice that I get to show my artwork and my new perspective"

Her pieces, along with those from over 130 artists whose works were selected for the anniversary exhibit, will be shown through January 17, 2023.

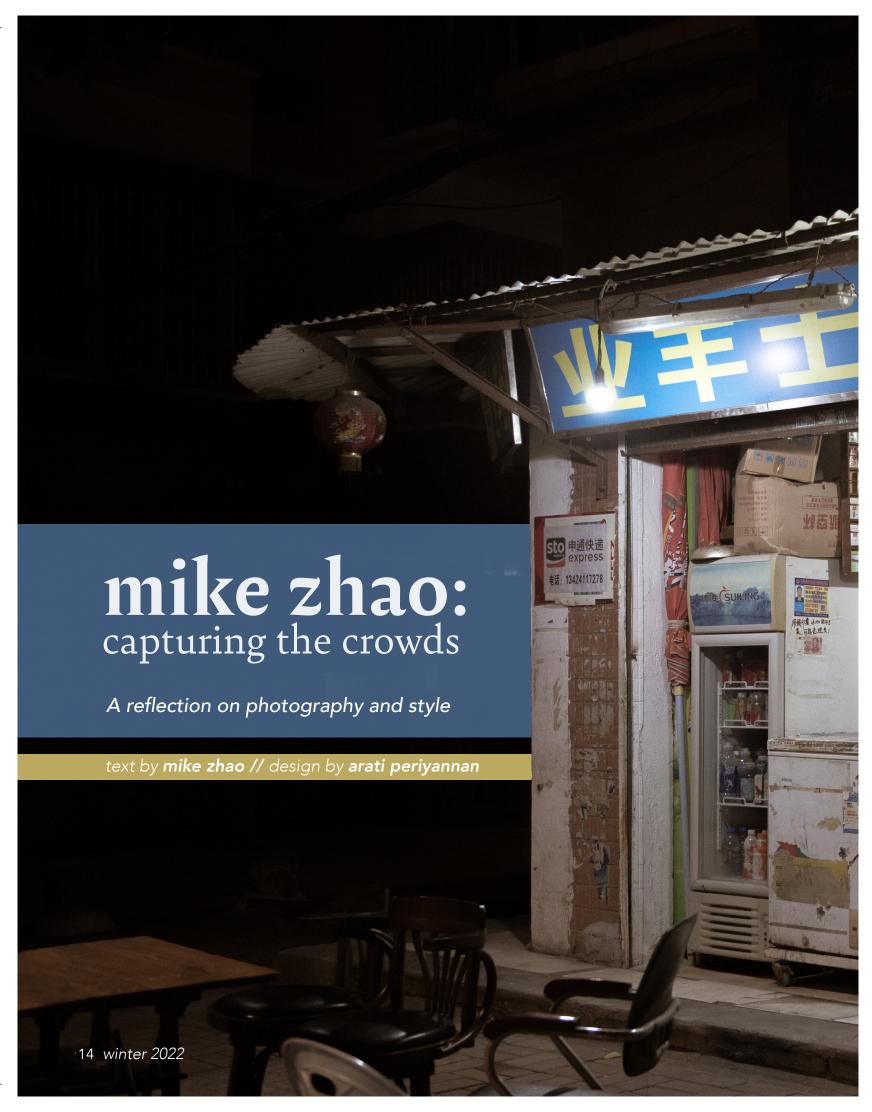
Top: Natya Chandrasekar explores artworks chosen by fellow artists in the midsized gallery.

Bottom left: Bay Area locals gather on the exhibit's opening night to view and purchase pieces by over 200 artists.

Bottom right: One of the two embroidered pieces by Natya Chandrasekar shown in this year's exhibit.

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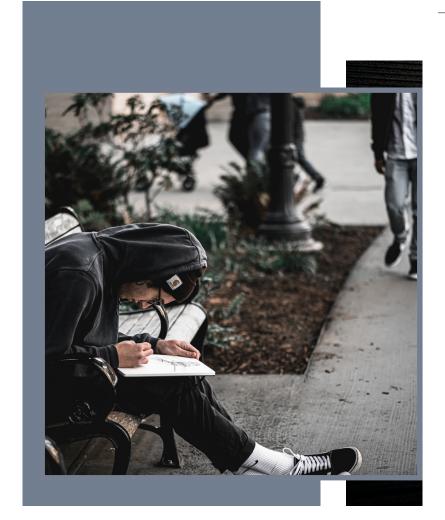


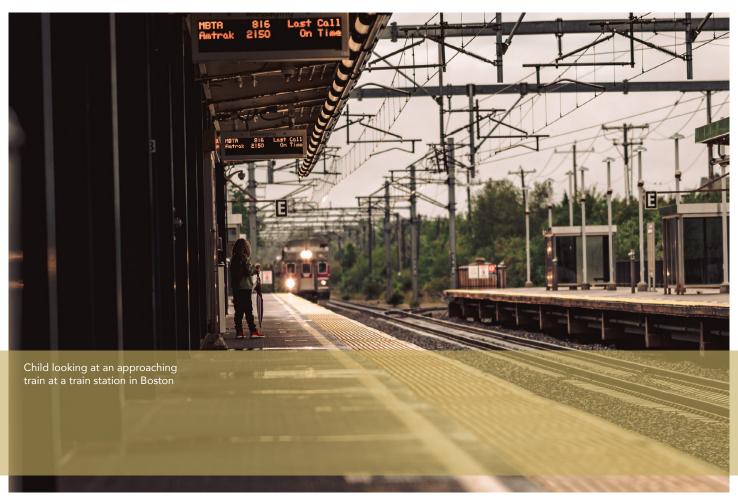
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hen I was young, my dad bought a Nikon d800 and the holy trinity of lenses: 14-24, 24-70, and 70-200. He never really had the time to learn photography so they sat in a corner collecting dust. Fastforward a few years, my good friend Jay told me all about his Canon 5D II; how to choose exposure, the effects of aperture, and the meaning of focal length. Before I knew it, I was a full on camera nerd running around California taking photos left and right, from landscape to sports photography.

Now, my main focus is portraiture and street photography. Something about everyday people just interests me. When I walk around, I'm always keeping an eye out for cool things happening around me. Interesting lighting conditions, interesting people, and interesting stories.

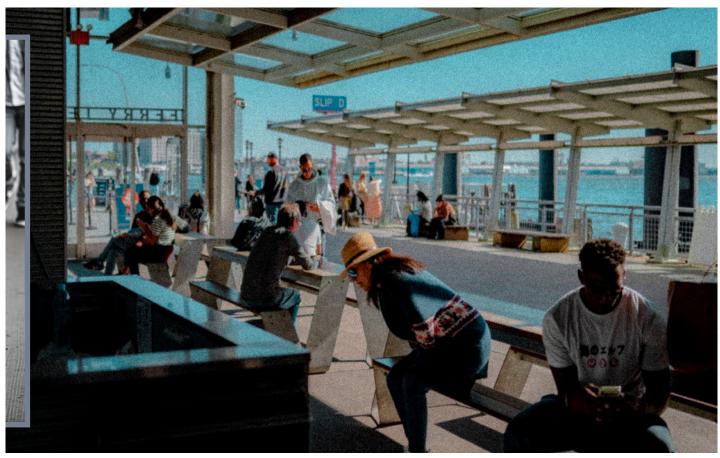
Stories like the man sitting on the bench next to his skateboard, sketching the architecture of the Palace of Fine Arts. But why? What is he drawing that makes him bend his spine so much to the point it





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People waiting for the ferry on a pier

looks like he is folding himself in half? Drawing with a pencil so short that it's almost non-existent, is that what he likes or is that all he has? Only he knows the answers to these questions but, using his story, we can create our own narrative. We can envision who he is as a person and how he spends a normal day of his life, from that one photograph.

Everything that catches my eye creates a vision of the completed image but achieving it takes patience and time. Sometimes I'll see a cool background... without a subject. So, I simply sit there and wait for the right person to walk into frame.

Sometimes, opportunities come out of nowhere. While heading back to the hotel on a Labor Day trip, I saw a massive protest. While spectating from the sidelines, I was surprised to see so many children who had been brought along by their parents. I noticed their reactions to the protest, cheering for an issue they might not fully understand. I paused and thought about how these children are the future of America. This spark of imagination created my portfolio titled Future of America, where I pose a question to the world: What kind of future are we creating for the next generation?

Still, the act of photography is followed by the most important step: editing. I went through every phase a photographically inclined teen could. I was the kid



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who cranked saturation and contrast to max. Then, after watching tons of YouTube videos, I hit my edgy phase. I desaturated my photos while boosting the contrast and clarity until the photos were grainy.

Over time, however, I was exposed to more editing styles. YouTube, teachers, and friends all offered critiques and new approaches which made me look at my own photos differently. I realized that manipulating a photo changes its mood and changes what it means. Dragging the clarity leftward made a dreamy effect. Now the edit's are all about the photo. How do I want the image to feel? Who is the photo for? If the photo is for myself I can edit however I want. If it's for a paid gig, I need to ask for their opinion while keeping colors natural

and focusing on seamlessness rather than stylizing. As scary as it may be, ask for critique. When you are a new photographer hoping to improve, the worst someone can do is to tell you that your photos are perfect. I encourage you to submit your best photo of all time to photo communities and ask for a critique, they will point out tiny details that you may have never considered.

Chances are you have your phone with you at almost all times. My advice? If you are interested in photography, go outside and take photos of whatever catches your eye. If you have a camera, and you are going to a family event, bring it. After all, I've learned that I'd rather be stuck with my camera than miss out on a beautiful shot.

(left) A picture of me on a skywalk

during the night.

(right) A man having some alone time during a wedding at a pier in Brooklyn, New York







(left) People sitting on the outside of the Oculus in NYC

(middle) The One World Trade Center through the skylight of the Oculus in NYC

(right) NYC sunset from the top of Summit One Vanderbilt



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A look into the Autumn Paly's Fiery Arts Glass Sale

text by karrie huang // design by annelise balentine

very fall, hundreds of sparkling glass pumpkins appear in Centennial Plaza, as if by fairy godmother magic. Each fragile creation is blown by glass instructors and advanced Palo Alto High School students over the summer break and made to help fund the glassblowing program.

Students in the Ceramics and Sculpture art lanes are given the opportunity to learn how to manipulate molten glass.

This year, more than just pumpkins are for sale. Delicate champagne coupes, optic molded tumblers and tall quilled vases line the sales tables. Fall-themed

items include hanging autumn leaves, harvest fruits and turkeys.

Most popular, still, are the multicolored pumpkins. They come in all shapes and sizes, from solid tiny pumpkins that can fit in the palm of a hand, to metallic blown pumpkins with curly twisted stems that are the size of a watermelon.

Some conform to natural inspirations, with orange bodies and green stems, but there are also pink pumpkins with iridescent surfaces and golden stems, and crystal clear ones that distort and refract light.

Customers mill around with woven baskets. Once purchased, each item is wrapped securely with bubble-wrap for safe transportation home.

In the winter, alongside the real Christmas trees were sold in the parking lot, with glittering glass pine trees in the Fiery Arts Winter Glass

Sale on Dec. 16 and Dec. 17. Snowmen, moose, acorns, Christmas ornaments and other seasonal items were also available.

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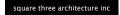
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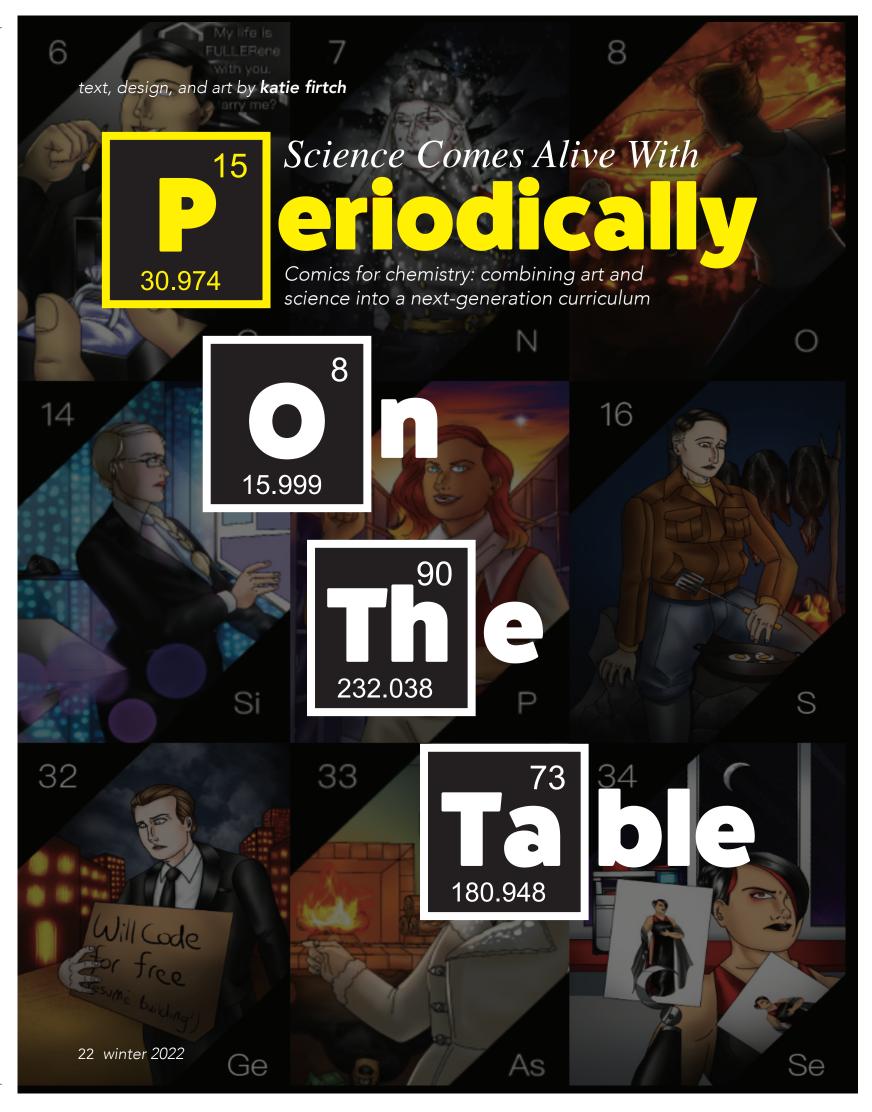


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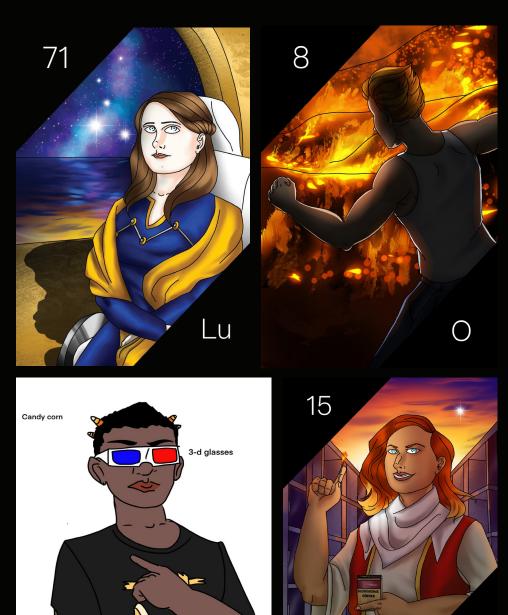


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hen I was in third grade, I saw a periodic table for the first time. I had no idea what the letters, numbers, and colors meant, but before I knew it, I was looking up the elements' names and learning about each one. I started to notice, "Hey, these elements have personalities (chemical properties), relationships (reactions), and families (groups)— they're kind of like people!" It wasn't long before I brought that thought to life, sketching a cast of characters, writing and drawing short stories, and piling loose papers and notebooks about their misadventures as high as the ceiling of my room.

I had been drawing since I could hold a pencil. I branched out from pen and pencil sketches into painting, marker, and my newfound favorite: digital art. As a fan of webcomics, I started to entertain lofty dreams of making "Periodically on the Table" (or PotT), as I had begun to call my project, into a comic or film. I ramped up the quality and quantity of my drawings and writings, hoping that somewhere, there was a place among the greats for the characters I had nurtured for so long. But after a few years, the question arose: what if PotT didn't have to be just a story?

It's a common misconception that "kids these days don't want to learn," and is often met with rebuttal that boredom is natural, given the perceived disconnect between curricula and "the real world" by students. But I saw how passionate my peers could be about the things they loved. And based on my research on the science of motivation and education, I found that student disengagement boiled down to three issues: difficulty connecting class material to real-world situations, a lack of personal interest in the material, and a lack of fun in the way the material was taught. Three challenges whose solutions were shrouded in vaults of complexity and shadows of frustration. But it dawned on me: PotT held the key.



Meet the main characters of PotT, clockwise from the top:

Luetta Urbain, a child prodigy who, like her element, lutetium, feels more like a perpetual test subject than her own person.

Oxli Kwasnik, a pessimist with an attitude more sour than the acid his element, oxygen, was named for.

Phonsia Fortis, a fiery nonconformist who isn't quite as bright as the reactions that her name-sake, phosphorus, undergoes.

Qayyim Balatin, an internet-obsessed prince who insists that his insights are more valuable than his element, platinum. Qayyim's portrait was made at the beginning of 2020, when I was stuck at home. The other portraits were made in 2021.

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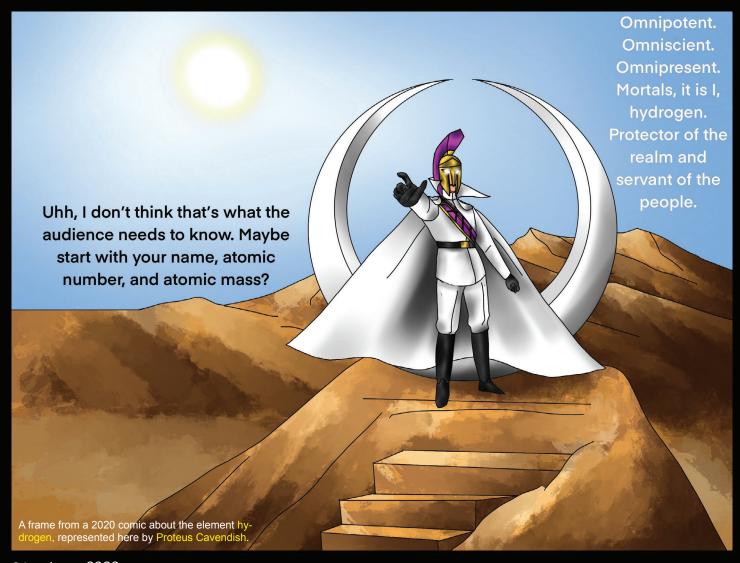
Why did I love working on PotT? It was because PotT helped me love learning. It had evolved into a series of educational comics accompanied by research extensions. It challenged me to interpret facts creatively. It showed me how to dissect complex ideas in an entertaining, narrative format. Even if the numbers, formulas, and rules of chemistry could feel bland, the life that my characters, stories, and worlds breathed into them made them exciting. Stories and art could be a powerful way to explain not just chemistry, but science as a whole, and communicate its importance. I was picking up so much information and prying further and further into topics I couldn't have dreamed of tying back to the periodic table before, and I was having fun. All I had to do now was find a way to make this experience accessible to others.

I started tackling the problem of accessibility to fellow students in high school, adapting what I loved about PotT to suit the needs of more general audiences. The comics and resources will all be available online, but will also be adaptable for printed usage. The first comic is planned for release by spring of 2023, and each comic will teach chemistry through stories featuring details and plot points that reference and use the concepts of interest, demonstrating their real-world applications.

Supplementing the lesson, research extensions prompt students to connect what they've learned in the comic to their own lives and interests. These extensions usually consist of a combination of online web quests, observation records, and reflection in the form of a project.

Today, my goals with PotT are still being realized. I'm working towards releasing comics that cover entry-level concepts like atomic structure and types of bonds, as well as off shoots that are about more niche—but still relevant—topics like metallurgy, nuclear chemistry, and biochemistry. The stars of the show are 118 characters whose personalities, appearances, and relationships are based on the physical, chemical, and historical properties of the elements. And as new discoveries have been made and new elements have been synthesized and named, the cast has continued to diversify and grow—a parallel to the ever-deepening and broadening nature of scientific knowledge.

From its beginnings as a whimsical world of my own, to its current status as an ongoing education project, PotT has a lot of ground to cover, and I hope that a whole generation of lifelong learners join me in this adventure. Keep on sciencing!



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PotT Gallery

Go to Periodicallyonthe Table.com to view all PotT content.

Follow @Official_PotT on Instagram for news and updates.



Below: a frame from an old comic where Phonsia and Proteus try to "teach" about atoms.

Right: a sharpie-and-highlighter sketch of a face-off between hydrogen (Proteus Cavendish) and actinium (Actaeonis Debierne.)



Oxygen

Name meaning: Acid maker

Atomic Number: 8

Atomic Mass: 15.9994 u

Group: 16

Period: 2

State at Room Temperature: Gas

Discovered: In 1773 by Scheele and in 1774 by Priestly

Where it's Found: In the atmosphere in certain minerals in the Earth's crust, in water

Common Applications: Life support, ore smelting, chemical synthesis, & much more!

Above: an example of the "fact sheets" for each element at the end of their comic, featuring oxygen (Oxli Kwasnik.)

Left: a promotional poster made in 2021, featuring phosphorus (Phonsia Fortis) and sulfur (Suleiman Furusiyya) rappeling down a volcano. It was titled "Fire and Brimstone."



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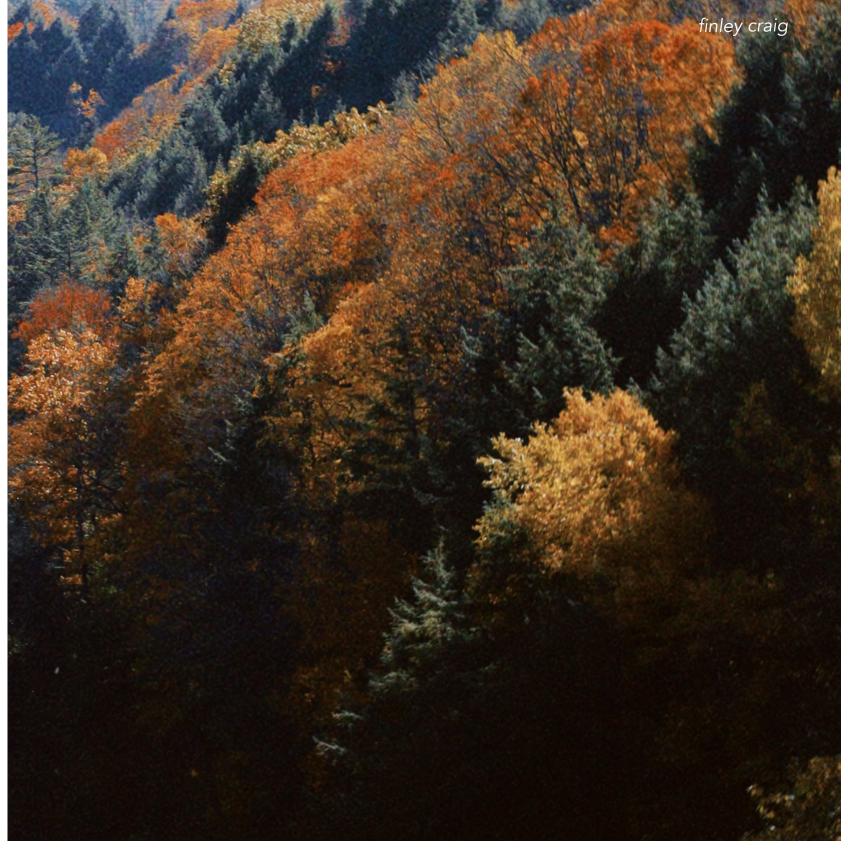
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[photo essays]



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Sophomore Natalie Neumann fills in the paint gaps on the diner door.



Anushka Junnarkar ('24) glues the prop jars of Gru's Old Fashioned Jelly to the front of their float.



Junior Sarabeth Huang paints a second coat on the evil minion, peeking out of the window of their 2024 rocket.





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photos by anna feng, sophia yang, lauren wong, daniel garepis-holland, annelise balentine

THROUGH SPINSTER





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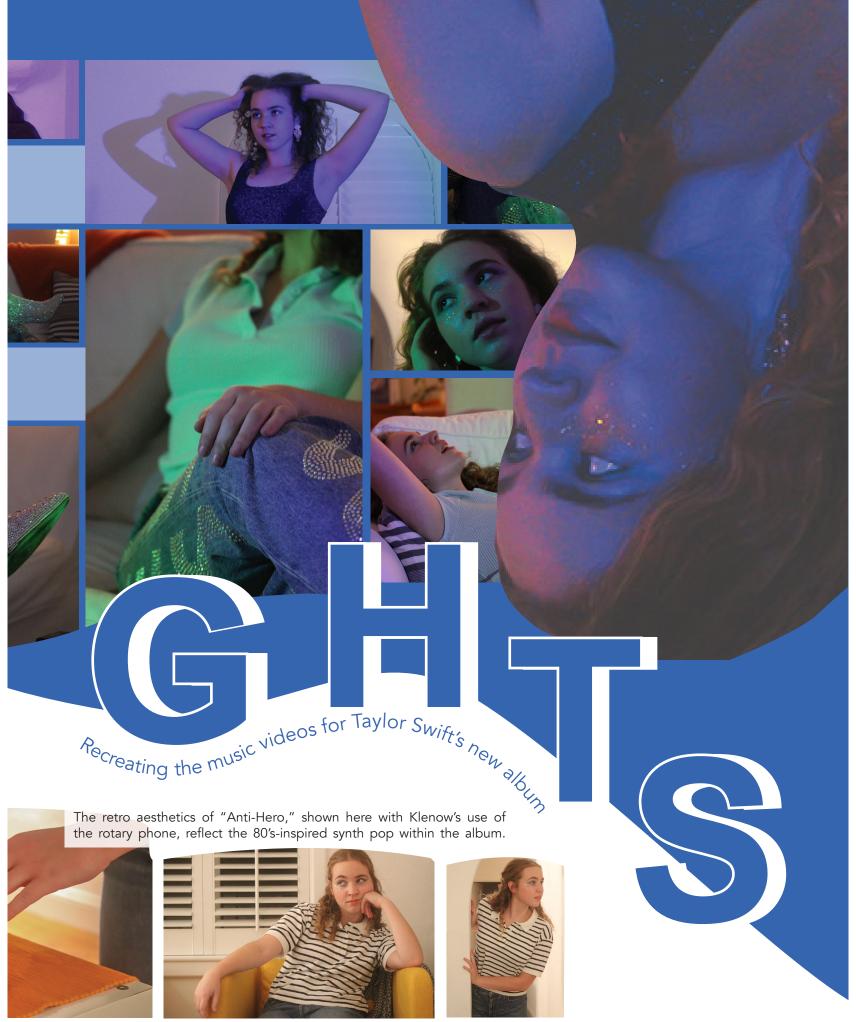




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text and design by madelyn castro Making Cool blue and indigo lighting on Annalise Klenow reflect the video for Swift's song "Bejeweled," which follows a Cinderella-inspired story. Annalise Klenow wears a casual rendition of the gem-adorned one-pieces that Swift wears in the "Bejeweled" music video. The costumes in "Anti-Hero" are patterned with stripes and accented with high necklines.

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student art gallery

We received many high-quality submissions to the gallery for this issue. Works here were evaluated blindly by the editors. Email proof.paly@gmail.com or visit the link in our Instagram bio (@proof.magazine) to submit for our next issue in spring 2023!

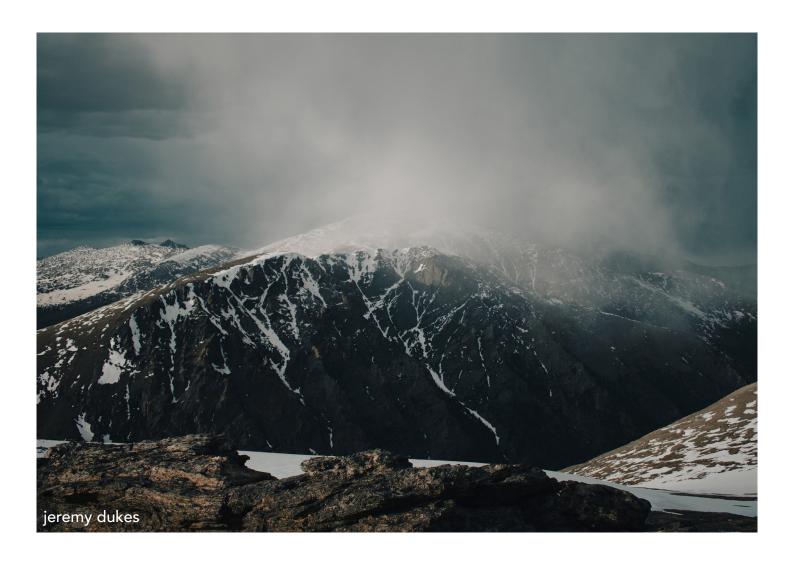


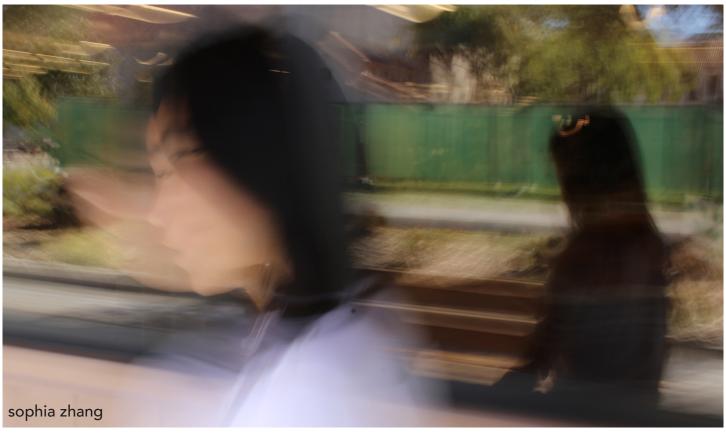




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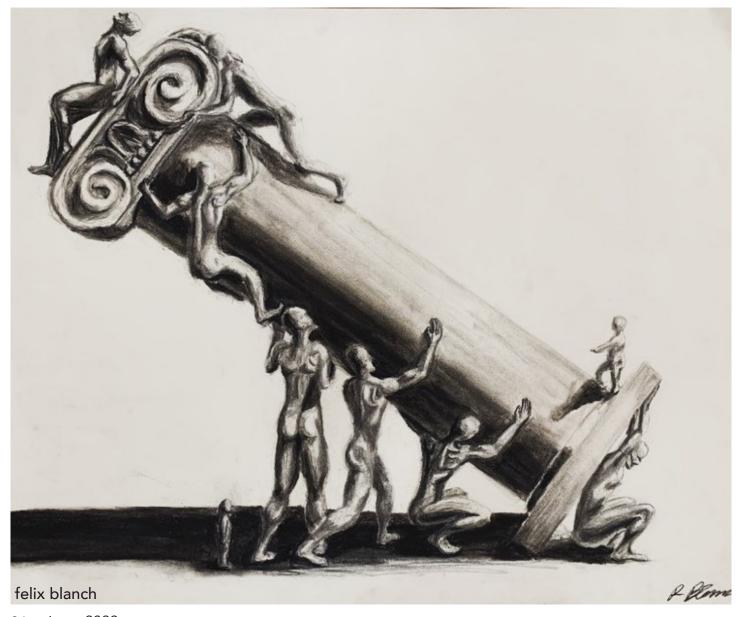




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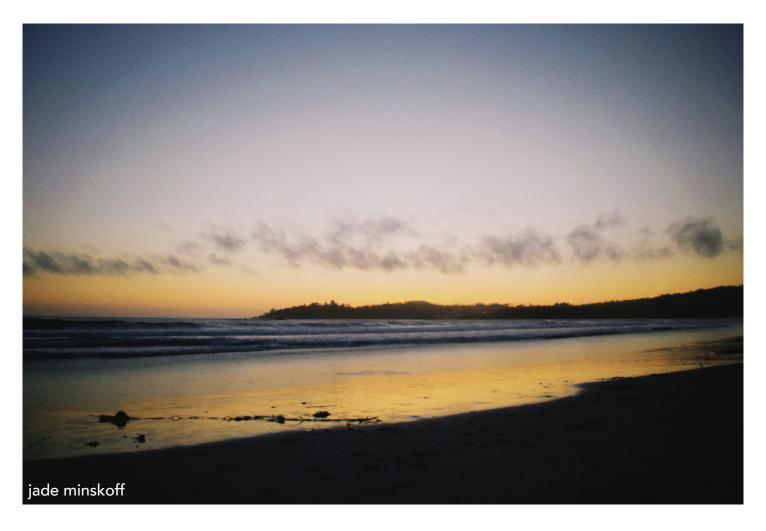






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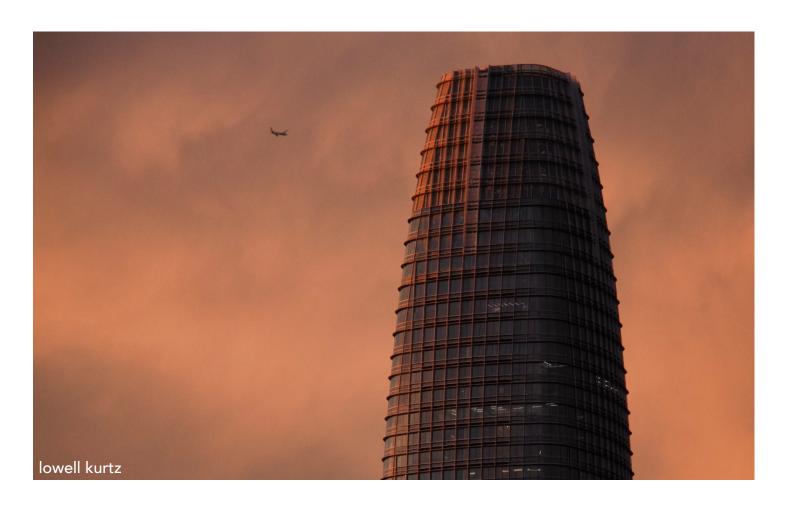






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