

25th December, 2021

JDSOLA's Independent Student Publication

THE LIBERAL CANON





Editor's Note

A festival of joy, jingles and miracles! Today, we send love to those who are alone and struggling during the holiday season. An environment of lights, Santa hats and presents often shadows those who are out in the cold, separated with their family and ones who don't receive a full bag of gifts. Yet, the beauty of Christmas attempts to spread fun and laughter to everyone. It's an occasion for us to unite with those we love and express our admiration with tangible objects. To hear jolly music and wear red and green, the spirit of Christmas is truly delightful.

Alongside this, we commemorate the end of 2021 and welcome new beginnings. New gym memberships and thousands of books bought represent hopes and motivation for a start that everyone is looking for. We hope that you find everything that you want and need in the coming year.

To keep this very short, TLC wishes all of you a very Merry Christmas and New Year! Thank you for keeping TLC alive for another year. Remember to keep safe during celebrations!

Sanah Shah





Editor's Note

With the end of a semester and the beginning of another one, we find ourselves a chance to improve on aspects that we want. I've always thought things would get better for us, students, when the month of December would arrive. It did so. A lot of us returned to college and the rest got to experience the offline college experience for the first time. While that does put us on a high pedestal of expectations for the future, the new COVID variant does seem to have clouded our minds. It has reminded us that the battle against the pandemic is not over. The message is clear while we do need to keep ourselves high with the holiday spirit of Christmas, we need to keep in mind our actions do have consequences even if it might not directly affect us.

This time during the Christmas, I hope The Liberal Canon keeps you company with the poems written by Nitya Menon and Meharpreet Gandhi, the pop culture reflection on Taylor Swift's Red by Saachi Gupta and the piece on 'I am 20', a short documentary film.

Enjoy this last festive season of 2021 before we enter the new chapter, another chapter in our lives.



Ashwanth Aravind Vidhya



Letter To Santa From a Not-so Good Girl

Meharpreet Gandhi

Dear Santa,

I let the snow from the shovel,
fall just a little into the house.
I have been baking all sorts of
gingerbread,
Only in my head,
All the things I have cooked
But never been fed.

It's all jingle and it's all bells,
In the house before and the house next,
But I can only let out a scream unholy,
I hope it can tell-
Form a closer look into this scribe,
Cover it with snow or hide.
The flakes must stay behind,
And in my eye the snow melts...

The vanishing of two loving reindeers,
An elf left behind.
Gifts delivered through chimneys,
To all those who've been kind.

Under my chimney
I take a little peak.
I have been strong,
Despite the urge to be weak.

I find only ashes

The festive cheer,
the Carols' cacophony,
Loud in my head
travel down my body;
Lurching in literal shudders.

I see them pass in my head,
Like the carousel
In the nearby carnival-
The candy cane tinted memories.

Pain painted Grinch,
Let me be.

For once you'll have to see
That merry be and merry stay,
Isn't too good for a girl cut off from her
parents' sleigh.

Man from the north pole:
This Christmas
find me a home,
Where my tears live free
and I can get past this agony.

.....

We are aware that many people have lost
loved ones in the recent pandemic. It
might seem only right to cheer them up,
but let's be mindful of their personal
space and respect their right to grieve.

HEARTBREAK TO HAPPINESS

Taylor's version

Saachi Gupta

Still on a mission to own all of the music she created in her 15 year-long career, Taylor Swift has now re-recorded another album, following the release of “Fearless (Taylor's Version)” earlier in 2021. This time, the re-recorded album is “Red” – Swift's fourth studio record released in 2012, one that the singer has described as “her only true heartbreak album.” In many ways, “Red” was a turning point in Taylor Swift's career – not only was it critically acclaimed and commercially successful, it was also this record that marked Swift's transition from country to pop, making her one of few artists to successfully switch genres. If “Fearless” made young Swift a star, it was “Red” that turned her into a superstar – so, it only made sense that this became the next re-recording the singer and songwriter decided to release. As with her previous re-recorded album, “Red (Taylor's Version)” was also released with nine never-before-heard tracks “From the Vault” – including the much-anticipated 10 minute version of “All Too Well” – making the record two hours long in total. With Swift's lyrical and musical genius, these two hours fly by easily.

From the very beginning, “Red (Taylor's Version)” sounds slightly different from the original. While the songs and their lyrics remain unchanged, the stronger vocals and more nuanced production makes the record sound more haunting, and somehow darker. This only seems right: the period in which “Red” was

created was a dark time for Taylor Swift, who, just coming out of her teen years, was also recovering from a painful break-up and a tumultuous relationship with a much older man, while dealing with the media's scrutiny, as well as an increasingly sexist public image that painted her as a cold, calculating serial dater writing songs about her famous exes. In this period, Swift's traumatic experiences were not taken seriously, often dismissed as jokes. Despite gaining immense popularity, “Red” was still seen as another break-up album by a singer who always “sang about boys” and “wrote break-up songs.” Interviewers and gossip magazines scrambled to find out who each song was about. In Swift's own words, people decided that her songwriting was “a trick rather than a skill and a craft.” In all of this, the masterful genius of “Red” and the pain behind it became almost secondary. It is only now, with “Red (Taylor's Version)” that Taylor Swift is reclaiming the narrative – highlighting, once again, how transformative and trying this period in her life was, and how the public made light of it instead of sympathising with the singer, who was creating art out of her most personal experiences. With its haunting, wistful atmosphere – the newly louder beats on “The Last Time” and the soft sadness of the vault track “Nothing New” featuring Phoebe Bridgers – Swift, now happier and in control her public image, brings out the pain that had marked this time in her life.

In an interview with Seth Meyers, the musician stated, “At the time, I was honestly really sad because I'd actually gone through the stuff that I sung about... It's really nice to be able to put this album out and not be sad. Not be taking breaks in between interviews to cry.”

Swift has often described “Red” as “a fractured mosaic of feelings”, stating that its sonical incohesiveness resembles a heartbroken person – going from devastated to furious to happy to lonely within minutes. The songs “From the Vault” only add to this chaos: while “Nothing New”, – arguably one of the best tracks on the record – “Better Man” and “Run” are poignant and heartbreaking, “Message in a Bottle” and “I Bet You Think About Me” are lighter takes on relationships. But the best track on the entire album is, without a doubt, “All Too Well (10 Minute Version)” – the expanded, full version of what has repeatedly been described as Swift's best song, cut down to five minutes when “Red” was originally released in 2012. The song, now slower, complete with haunting background vocals and a darker production, was accompanied by a short film starring Dylan O’ Bryan and Sadie Sink. In all its 10 minutes, “All Too Well” does not once feel dull, or like it's dragging on, as Swift quickly transitions from moment to moment in a magical relationship – from a drive out of town, to her 21st birthday party, to calling her ex out for dating young women, and addressing her drastic weight loss in 2012. The lyrics are crafted expertly, masterful in a current-Taylor Swift “folklore” way – and the 10 minute-long track ends up surpassing all expectations, and is, to put it simply: the perfect Taylor Swift song (it is also the only song I have listened to in a month, so that definitely helps).



With “Red (Taylor's Version)”, Taylor Swift proves that no one does emotions like her, and there is nothing embarrassing about feeling too much and creating art out of it. Since the album's original release almost a decade ago – when Swift was still finding her way around the music industry – the singer has grown into a more seasoned, experienced artist, and carved a permanent place for herself in the world of superstardom. She has managed to retain a loyal fanbase, while also falling back into public favour, and letting her work speak for itself. Back when “Red” came out in 2012, Swift needed to prove herself again and again as a singer, songwriter, and performer – only the most polished and perfected tracks made it onto albums. Now, after having established herself as a brilliant songwriter, Swift is secure in her talent. Her songs “From the Vault” are a reminder of her growth, of how far the singer has come both professionally and personally. “Red (Taylor's Version)” is, thus, a reminder that things do get better – something that the Taylor Swift who wrote the album would never have believed then.

I am 20 in 2021

Shriya Krishnan

“Our achievement is that we have a hopeful tomorrow. Our failure is that our today is very precarious. Let me put it this way. If all the people in this country who didn’t fancy their prospects were asked to quit, I think I would stay because it’s something big. It’s a huge experiment and I would like to be a part of it.”

A young man who introduced himself as Tirunelveli Neelakanth Subramaniam utters these words at the end of a 19-minute documentary named I am 20. In 1967, the Film Division of India commissioned the well-known director S. N Sastry to scour for Indians as old as the nation itself to ask them questions about India. Their answers helped us gauge their ambitions, anxieties and their understanding of freedom. Young Indians born on 15th August 1947 appear in black and white hues interspersed with glimpses of India’s people and culture. The video available on the Film Division’s Youtube channel is a fascinating deep-dive into young 20-somethings in 1967 and their thoughts about bribery, corruption and their likes as participants and witnesses of an enormous but burgeoning nation. The documentary features women and men, some of whom speak Bengali, Hindi, Punjabi, but most speak English. S N Sastry’s work is an intriguing watch. One passionate pilot says “I am an Indian and India means everything to me. I’m a part and parcel of India and India is a part of me.” This shot is swiftly followed by a guy sitting with a ukulele saying “I don’t have

any love for this country” minutes before he is humming a famous Beatles number. Some people express their skepticism for the country, their dismay at the poor living standards while some express their admiration for the fledgling nation. After watching this video, I was curious to know more. Where did these people go? Did they become the meteor scientists, the Field Marshall and the government employees they wanted to be? After scouring the Internet, I found some articles about these people. Some of them who expressed the most skepticism ended up devoting their lives to the cause of India. According to the information available on the internet, the man whom I quoted, in the beginning, moved to the U.S.A, never to be part of the “huge experiment” he talked about so passionately. Somehow, this stuck with me for days. I wonder what prompted him to move away.

In the month of December, the Indian diaspora usually comes back to India to spend time with their families. There often exists skepticism amongst these people regarding India’s present and the future, and rightfully so. I have witnessed conversations about how things can “never change” in India. I don’t think I can test the truth or falsity of that statement but I know people are very well entitled to their opinions. I will seek refuge in a popular film named Swades. The protagonist, Mohan, is faced with questions of identity, belonging and social issues as he grapples with the India he long left behind.

December Winters

Nitya Menon

The film is definitely idealistic in its resolution but it urges you to ponder about what it means for people to stay put or come back to this nation to contribute to the experiment.

I am 20 features a woman who says that she got married when she was 8 which is quickly followed by young educated Indians speaking fluent English.

The film encapsulates the contradictions that this country holds within itself. The stark inequalities are visible in the film itself. It feels like a conscious decision to let the documentary flow in this way. S N Sastry's documentary is particularly interesting because it's neither a love letter to India nor an angry rant. The 20-year-olds of 1967 display a kind of skepticism that is necessary for a country. The ability to question and rethink our ways might just be essential for our progress as a nation. The documentary filled me with a kind of melancholy I can't properly elucidate. It's our tragedy that we are still grappling with the same issues. But, it's also our triumph that the documentary represents the same vitality that I can see today.

Like boxes we're piled up
one peek,
out of the window, I'd see you make your
hair
I'd hate to be so close;
packed up like tiffin boxes,
almost the same breeze we share
now that we're locked in
I sit on my window sill
you smile
and I look away
shy away
I go away
after a long time
I come back to that window sill
that we almost share
and I hoped to
see you
make your hair.



JD16 LOVES

MOVIE



KLAUS

BOOK



THE POLAR EXPRESS

TV SHOW



THE GREAT

PODCAST



THE LOST CHRISTMAS

ONLINE COURSE



CODE ACADEMY
- JAVA SCRIPT

WORKOUTS



DAILY BURN

GAMES



MONUMENT VALLEY 2

TAKE OUT



THE NUTCRACKER

**INSTA PAGE
OF THE MONTH**



@FAYEDSOUZA

BORED GAMES



DOTS

APPS



JUST DANCE NOW

ONLINE SHOPS



MR.DIY

**MENTAL WELL
BEING**



MIND

SNEAKERS



NIKE AIR FORCE 1

ART



THE CYCLOPS,
ODILON REDON

DESTINATION



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