



• MOON *Press* ISSUE 5 •  
SATELLITE & COLONY



# GUEST EDITOR'S NOTE

by Sapphira Toppler

The Moon has been revered and personified as a deity in almost every culture and religion since ancient times. Even from as long as 20000-30000 years ago, the Moon has been a guide to humanity, when its cycles are believed to have been used as the basis for such primeval calendars as notched bones. Many cultures connected lunar cycles with those of women's menstrual cycles, as is evinced by the words "moon" and "menstruation" sharing linguistic roots.

This may also explain why many deities and personifications of the Moon are feminine – examples being Selene/Luna and Artemis/Diana of Ancient Greek/Roman mythology, Chang'e of China mythology, Awilix of Mayan mythology, and Metzli of the Aztec Empire. However, there are also many male lunar deities – notable examples being Tsukuyomi of Japan, Khonsu of Ancient Egypt, Máni of Norse mythology, and Chandra of Hinduism. Many aspects of lunar mythology and folklore have served as inspiration for art in all its forms.

Although the notion of lunar habitation might seem recent, it made scarce appearances in mythology and folklore, notably in the works of the Ancient Greek writer Lucian of Samosata, and in the Japanese folktale 'The Tale of the Bamboo Cutter'. The theme gained dramatic popularity after the invention of the telescope in 1608, and in the present day it is a common topic of science fiction works.

Contrary to the nature of art to draw inspiration from mythology, however, moon colonisation in fiction far precedes any serious scientific discussion of the topic. Lunar expeditions in the 1900s demonstrated to many that lunar habitation isn't as far-fetched as once believed, and may in fact be realised in the relatively near future.

While the topics of lunar mythology and habitation may seem somewhat disparate, they exist at opposite ends of the timeline of humanity's relationship with the Moon, and serve as past and future inspiration for humanity's creativity. How lunar habitation might manifest in practice, however, remains uncertain. Though it could better humanity, many of the figures concerning themselves with the topic are amongst the rich and powerful. Humanity's relationship with the Moon may be timeless, but it isn't unthinkable to anticipate colonialism and exploitation in the future of lunar colonisation.

I hope you enjoy the following pages of exploration through the past, present, and future of our perennial satellite.

Guest Editor: Sapphira Toppler

Graphic Designers: Andrea Galano Toro & Naomi Hubert

Cover Art: Okocha Obasi

Producer: Anjali Prashar-Savoie

# CONTRIBUTORS

## Sapphira Toppler

is a composer, writer, artist, and musician based in Greenwich. She graduated from Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in 2020 with a masterdegree in composition, and in 2021 she co-wrote and composed the soundtrack for an art film, *Hibernation Dream*. Her most significant works are a suite combining acoustic instruments with chiptune, an orchestral symphony, and a trilogy of science fiction fantasy novels. She has also facilitated several composition workshops.

**Guest editor**

**cover artwork**

Quinn Clark is an award-winning writer, creative facilitator and researcher based in Newcastle upon Tyne. A fan of wicked wordplay and well-done puns, Quinn frequently collaborates with educational and charitable institutions in the production of creative content, including stories, workshops, and exhibitions. Quinn loves to incorporate cheeky jokes into their writing and believes in the inherent value of everyone's artistic expression. They have a children's colouring book with Ladybird Publishing due for publication later this year, and are working on their debut novel, full of scientific mishaps, magical creatures, and octopuses.

**10**

Okocha Okazi is a London-born designer and art director, often moving between critical theory and hardcore graphic design. Their practice is deeply involved in the community, science fiction, music, and fashion. He often explores work and methods intuitively, while still being intimate, sharp, and vulnerable. When not creating, Okocha runs his own club night called "Tongue N Teeth", the sister brand to his publication platform Racezine. Okocha wants to be known as "a designer who dares to live".

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Daura Campos is a Latin American, self-taught, lens-based artist based in Belo Horizonte, Brazil. Her photographic practice challenges traditional image-making processes, with a subtext that prompts broader conversations on the implications of existing in a dissident body.

Daura is a 2022 Forge Fellow and was a convener at the 2021 Hemi Convergence for the Hemispheric Institute of Performance and Politics by the New York University in partnership with the University of Chicago. Daura has exhibited in the Museum of Art of Pereira, Experimental Photo Festival, Humble Arts Foundation, and had her work displayed on billboards at the Times Square in New York City and in the cities of Los Angeles, Chicago, and Toronto.

**12**

Indira Toussaint is a Saint Lucian born poet and artist whose work interweaves narratives of home, displacement, and everything in between. As a multidisciplinary artist her work has led her to partner with the likes of O2 Think Big, Piccadilly Theatre and Russell Group Universities in the UK.

Catch her chatting about black femme solo travel with her co-host via their upcoming podcast *Drinking Sunsets*. She is also half of the dynamic duo *Twossaints* who can be found teaching Creole and archiving Saint Lucian culture.

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Holly Rowley is a writer/trans-disciplinary creator based in Liverpool. Their work is most concerned with desire, technology, subjectivity, and the sacred and euphoric experience under capitalism. At the moment, their interest in zine culture and independent publishing has sprouted @neckinon, especially for exploring pornographic philosophies in fictional erotic prose.

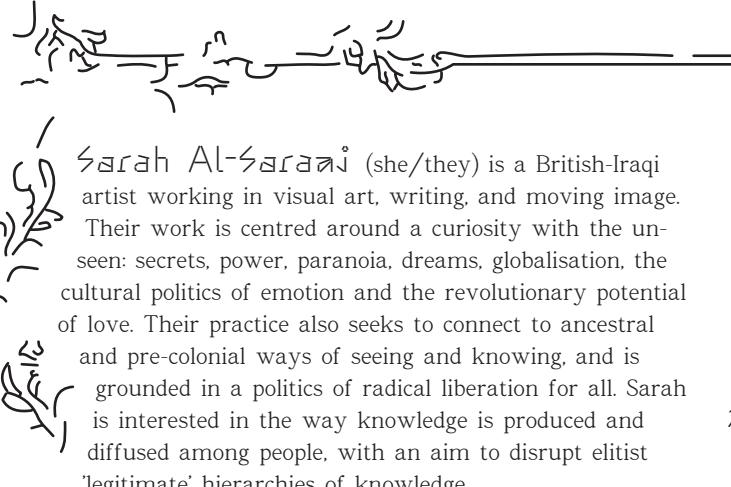
22

Sam Stewart is a young multidisciplinary artist working in installation, digital mediums, and sculpture. His practice engages with emerging technologies, their implications on the world around us, and how they can be used to develop visual art. He is interested in exploring and engaging with memes and digital subculture.

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Pavani Kondai is an upcoming writer, as well as content creator, sharing her writing journey as well as talking about international film and tv. Pavani is a final year media production student, with a keen interest in marketing and storytelling. Loving all things that bloom from curiosity and spinning worlds from what if's.

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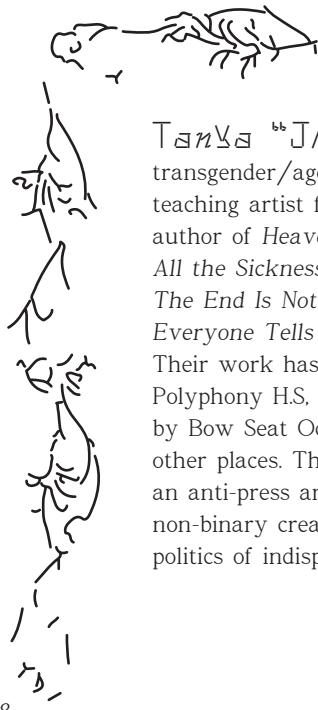
7  
Sarah Al-Sarraj (she/they) is a British-Iraqi artist working in visual art, writing, and moving image. Their work is centred around a curiosity with the unseen: secrets, power, paranoia, dreams, globalisation, the cultural politics of emotion and the revolutionary potential of love. Their practice also seeks to connect to ancestral and pre-colonial ways of seeing and knowing, and is grounded in a politics of radical liberation for all. Sarah is interested in the way knowledge is produced and diffused among people, with an aim to disrupt elitist 'legitimate' hierarchies of knowledge.

Sarah is currently an Associate at Open School East, an alternative community-focused arts programme. Prior to this, they completed a BSc at University College London in Arts and Sciences, an interdisciplinary degree which allowed them to draw scientific concepts into their creative work. Sarah previously worked within Forensic Architecture, a research agency that works to create new technologies and methodologies to contradict official state narratives of human rights violations. She is currently programme coordinator for Healing Justice London, an organisation working in health, healing, anti-oppression and liberation practice, creating spaces for healing for communities subject to marginalisation.

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Teddy Knights is a 19-year-old non-binary artist who creates traditional and digital pieces for fun. Teddy mainly focuses on character work since their head is always full of wacky ideas.

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Tanya "JADE VINE" Singh is a queer, transgender/agender anarchist, poet, essayist, and teaching artist from Chandigarh, India. They are the author of *Heaven is Only a Part of Our Body Where All the Sickness Resides* (Ghost City Press, 2018) and *The End Is Not Apocalypse But Another Morning Where Everyone Tells Me I'm Dead* (Yavanika Press, 2021). Their work has appeared in *Gone Lawn*, *Minola Review*, *Polyphony H.S.*, and elsewhere, and has been recognized by Bow Seat Ocean Awareness Student Contest, among other places. They are a founding member of Quilab, an anti-press arts collective for South Asian trans + non-binary creatives. They are deeply inspired by the politics of indispensability. They use all neopronouns.

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Nicoleta Mureș lives and works in Cluj-Napoca, Romania. By using photography and 3D human bodies, Nicoleta creates digital collages, videos, and Instagram filters representing individuals trapped in virtual realms.

Her artworks predict a dystopian future, where people have to deal with unreal emotions, isolation, and disembodiment while being influenced by how technology fuels humanity's desire to consume.

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**Andrea Galano Toro** (she/her) is a graphic designer and artist with a focus on research and storytelling. Born in Spain and raised in Chile, currently based in Berlin. She is interested in how site-specific work can emerge from a feeling of displacement. Following this, she began to tell stories through the exploration of traces, and their materiality. These stories are told through voices of objects, monuments, land, mountains, sand, and water. Respectfully the stories find their form mostly in video installations and publications. Simultaneously she is busy writing spells with her research collaborator Laila Saber Rodriguez in their collective Cruda.

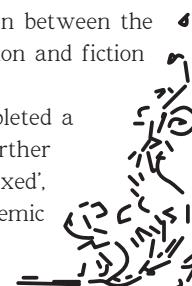
graphic designer

Both Andrea and Naomi share an urge in dismantling Western patriarchal norms of graphic design, aiming to introduce elements of play, intuition, decoration and magic.

**Naomi Hubert** (she/her) is both a self-initiated and commissioned graphic designer and artist, with a focus on (speculative) storytelling and research. Her practice is situated between design and applied art, rejecting a division between the 'pure' and the 'applied'. She makes use of imagination and fiction as tools to seek for otherworldly narratives.

During the BA Graphic Design, Hubert completed a Gender Studies minor at Utrecht University to further develop her interest in explorations beyond the 'fixed', Western, understanding of our world through academic theory and writing.

graphic designer



# LUNASELENE

Glaze up at this hot not-spot of sea

Situated in tranquility

Take a jot, yacht-shot, of spacy gle

When you're eyes stare high and locate me.

What do you see on my pockmarked floor?

Half-cocked fur flocks into lago morphs?

Tale 316 doesn't tell a lie

But the bunny did leporid a.

Perhaps I'm a distant phone screen glare:

The milky sheen of a newborn mare:

A fiery teen with snow-kissed-hair:

A milquetoast dream going who knows where.

Or am I cream in a steaming pie?

Metastasis in a fiendish eye?

A being with no discernible bound

Disturbed by being above the ground.

It's evident that you care too much

Whether I'm a metaphor or such:

One surface analytical touch

Reveals nothing but a rabbit's hutch.

Is it wrong to trend aesthetic?

Or drown in Sakra-life ascetic?

Upon undue undulations mass

Drive your desperate hopes, lathe all in glass.

Save yourselves all that consternation

You'll find a lack of consolation

Despite my intimate location:

I hang below the constellations.

Does SolHelios know that I breathe?

What nixed axe shall I, as Nyx, unsheathe?

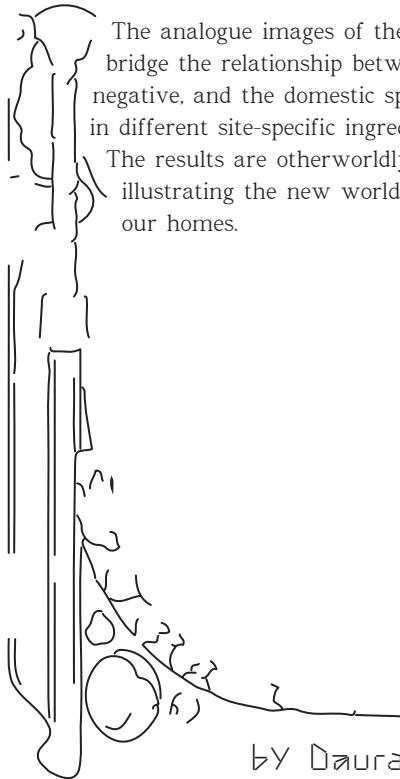
Curling bright, blessed cogitation

Upon brute human squestration.

by Quinn Clark

# ONCE UPON A PINK MOON

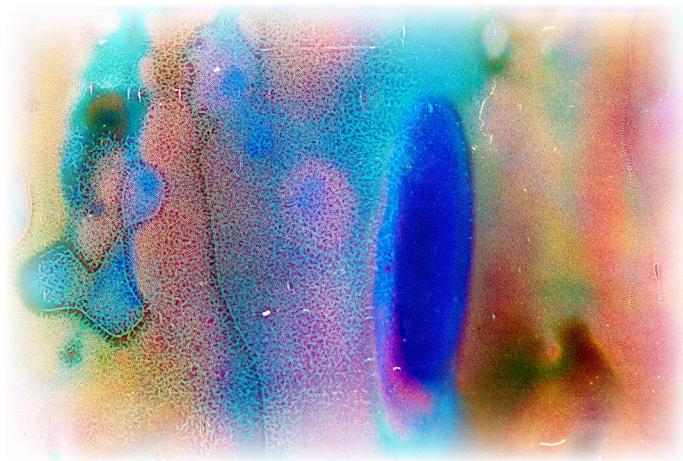
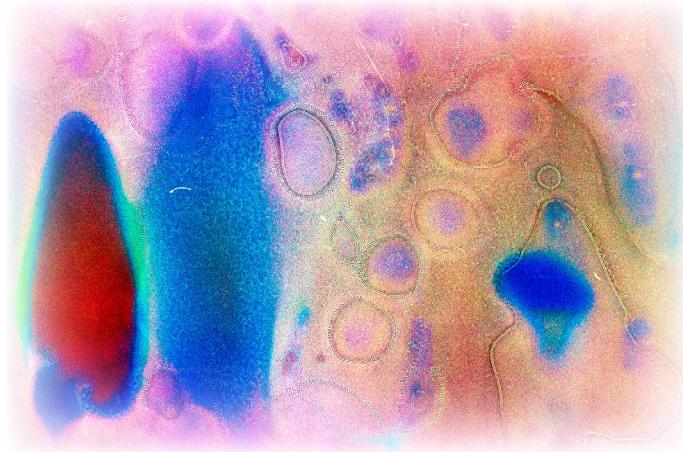
People of marginalised identities face oppressive environments, either at home or in the world outside. Imagining new realities is a way to escape – even momentarily – toxic circumstances. This work analyses escapism as a consequence of living under persecution.

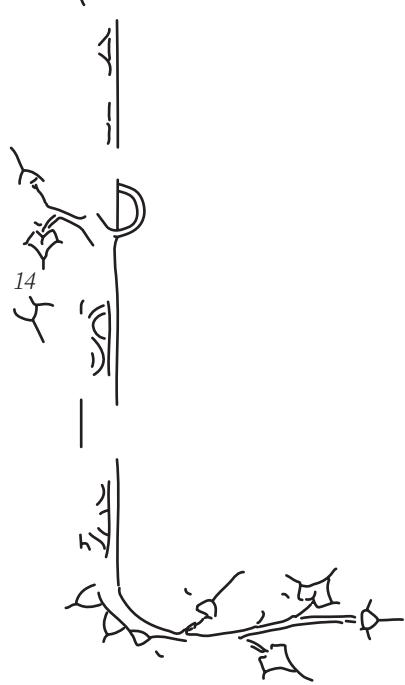


The analogue images of the white walls of my home bridge the relationship between a white canvas, the film negative, and the domestic spaces. The film was soaked in different site-specific ingredients, dried, and processed.

The results are otherworldly, painterly, abstract images, illustrating the new worlds imagined while confined in our homes.

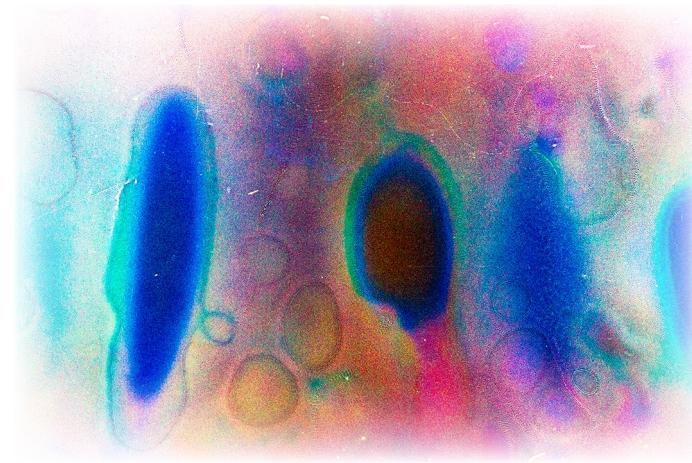
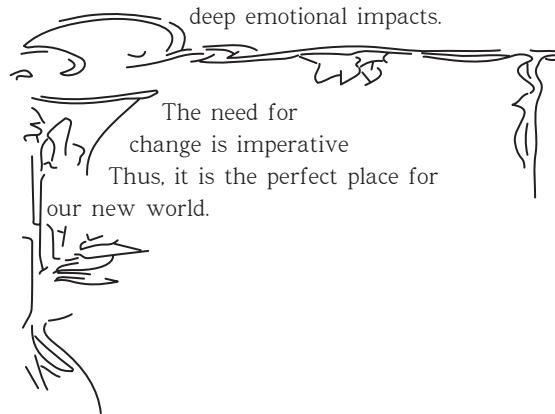
by Daniela Campos

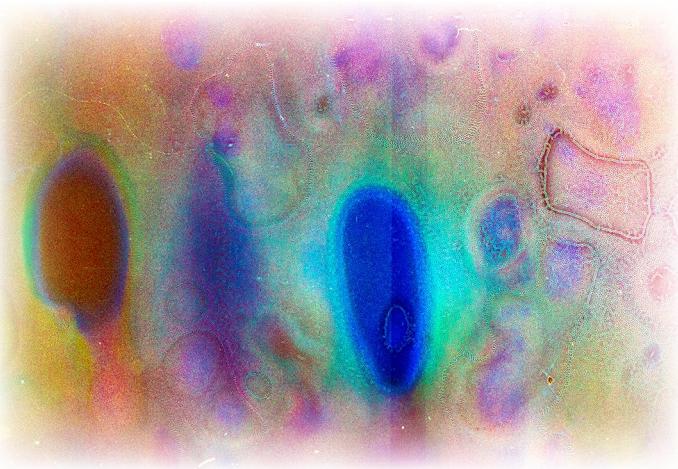




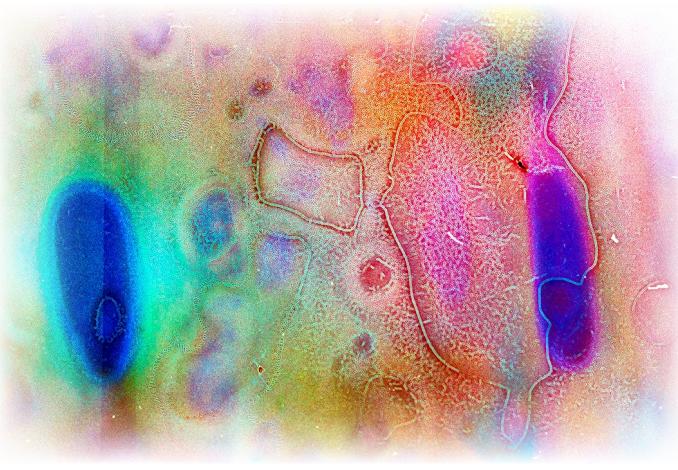
The pink moon signifies change.

Its gravitational pull has





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## WHEN THE MOON SNEEZES ALL THE HUMANS FREEZE

I gave you potions bottled in prayers

You refused to drink

Instead:

built shrines for gods that know not your name

bowed on pulpits that never cradled comfort

read scripture of mangled tongues

You: too consumed by Other to notice my entirety

You: made a mockery of me

You: foolishly renounced me to Them

I: begged you to ask the Wise Sage about me

I: marvelled at your disbelief

I: without fail, appeared every night

They: created misaligned charts of false truths

I grimaced as they gutted you

Over time,

turned you hollow

heart left on shorelines of ill-history

Once empty you returned,

submarined in salty waters

body limp, near lifeless

You peeked upward for me,

bartering for redemption

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by Indira Toussaint

If you had visited the Wise Sage  
they'd summon the singers  
ask them to recant lullabies sung in my absence

Call forth the poets  
request lovers' finishing words in my presence

Gather the drunkards  
interrogate the forgotten fortunes they have wished away  
under my gaze

Petition the scientists  
who sent flag-hungry men in pursuit of  
national pride

18

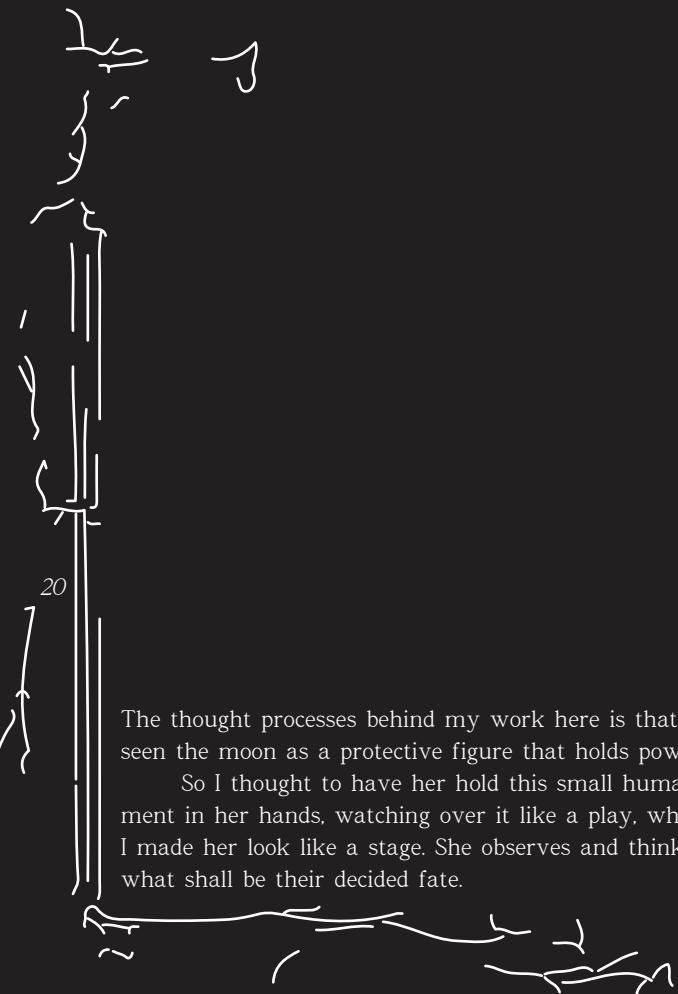
You would know me  
too

I will not always shine  
here

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# SHE WATCHES



The thought processes behind my work here is that I've always seen the moon as a protective figure that holds power.

So I thought to have her hold this small human settlement in her hands, watching over it like a play, which is why I made her look like a stage. She observes and thinks about what shall be their decided fate.



by Teddy Knights

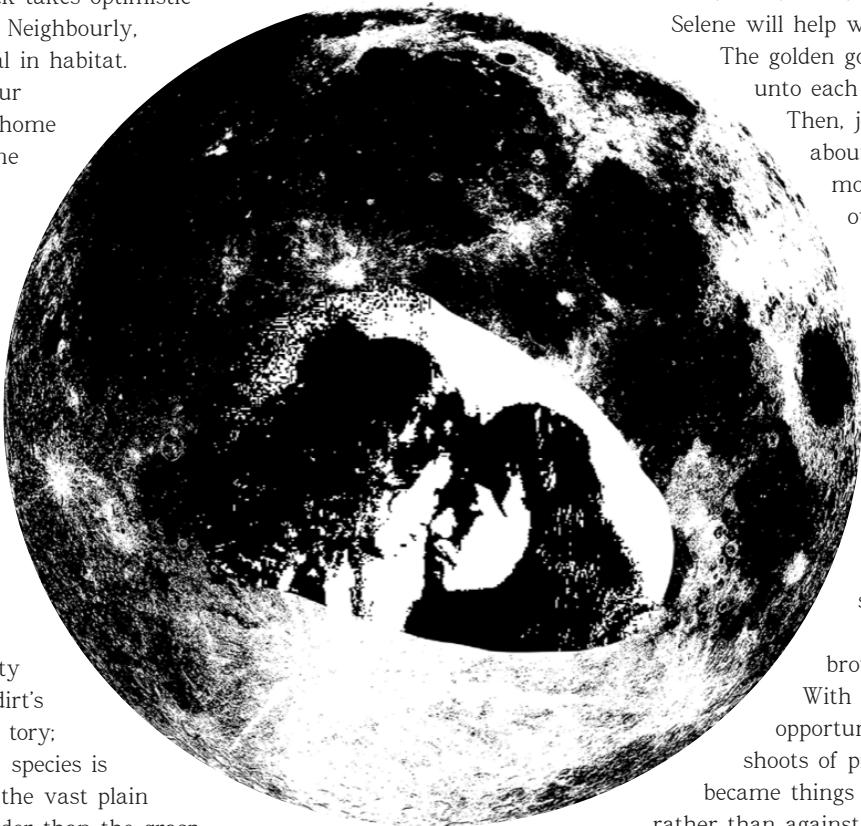
# SELENE

Flat palms meet with hopefulness; a fleshy gesture harnessing energy from our infinite sky. News of the cube on the moon, glues fingers in the gaps of strangers' hands. Gathering round the projector screen; a moon rock takes optimistic shape as a homely construction. Neighbourly, familiar, but still extra-terrestrial in habitat.

Religion was long lost in our community; the introduction of home computers obscured our telephone wire to God. So, encouraged by the bright reflection of the Super-moon, our elders dug into the rich earth of ancestry and uncovered an ancient trust of Selene. For no knowledge as certain as the dirt and rock of celestial bodies, can ever be forgotten, my mother says. Even when we've gone round the sun thousands of times.

In these gatherings of old and young faces, we acknowledge the density of his history; how our spread across time, far of the Geor- the culture with our need to turn clocks increasing dormaint seeds of

the density  
dirt's  
tory;  
species is  
the vast plain  
wider than the grasp  
gian calendar. All the while;  
machine constantly accelerates,  
away from the hands of mechanical  
proportionally. Together we fertilise  
intelligence buried deep beneath the



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dense bog of culture, in the reclaimed community garden next spring. We burnt our worries on a bonfire. We whispered lost mythology.

What must eventually reveal itself: Selene will help with her magnetism.

The golden goblet of emotion spilling unto each other. Cheers.

Then, joyous songs are sung about the mysterious lunar monolith, they echo all over. Synodic harmonies of 210.42Hz flood into open ears and hearts of gathered generations.

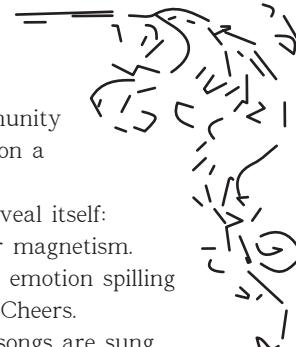
We dance around the old hall in cycles that break down and become embodied by many smaller cyclic moments. Our shadows embalmed by Her full beam and a dimly projected photo enshrining a collective hope.

The Super-moon brought us great news.

With the waxing brings new opportunities arising like the off-shoots of precious seedlings. Seasons became things that happened with us rather than against us. Everything lives, then dies, and there's incredible peace in a calm water.

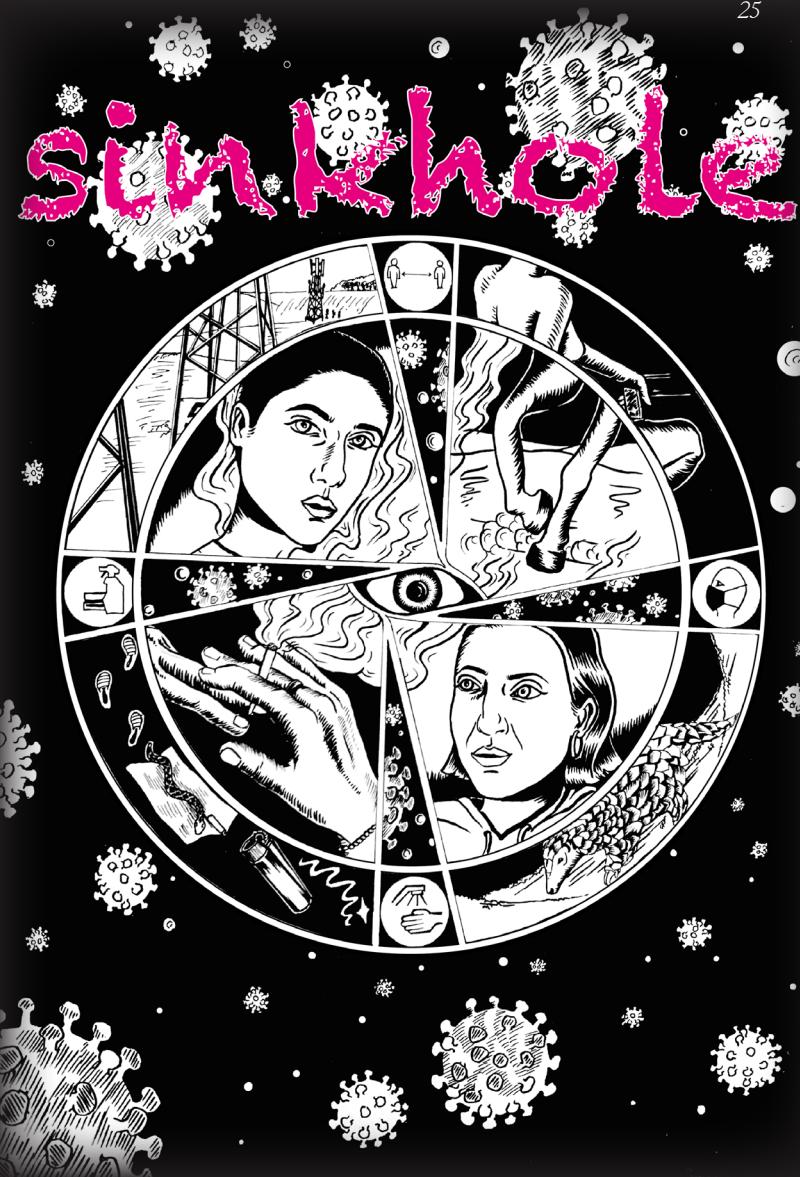
The desolate cratered surface reflects life in a pre-embryonic state. It was never the cube that brought us together, it was Selene and her truth. Her cycle felt deep in the rhythm of our dancing bodies. And when the cube turned out to be just a rock, nothing in our hearts was diminished.

BY Holly Rowley





BY Sarah Al-Sarraf



LATER THAT EVENING...



UGH, SAME

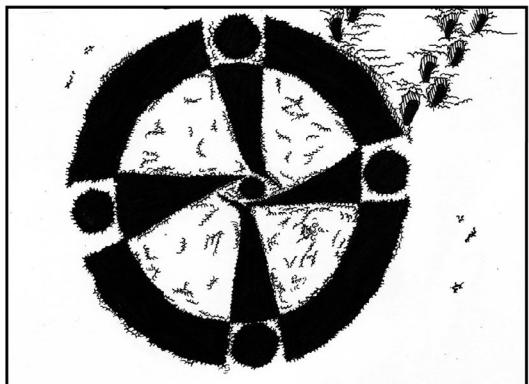


YOU KNOW... SOMETIMES, I FEEL LIKE HAVING TO LIE TO MY MUM SO MUCH... IT'S LIKE I'VE CREATED THESE WORLDS WHERE, YOU KNOW, I DON'T DRINK AND I'VE NEVER DRANK AND I DON'T SMOKE WEED...



...WORLDS WHERE I'M STRAIGHT BUT I'VE NEVER DATED ANY BOYS... I GUESS IT'S KIND OF LIKE WORLD BUILDING. I MEAN I GUESS IT'S NOT THAT BIG OF A DEAL, I GUESS EVERYONE LIES ACTUALLY.....





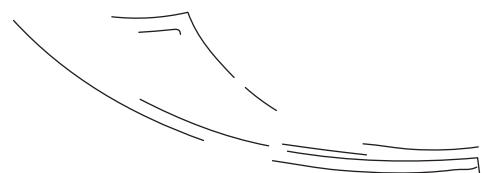
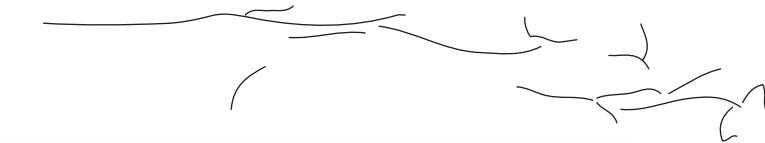
## IMAGINED MOONS



The imagery displayed here was generated by feeding neural networks 2673 images of the moon in its various phases. The outcome is the algorithm's understanding of these images and its attempt to replicate them.

by Sam Stewart

In merging the moon – a mythological symbol engrained in ancient cultures – with new digital tools that prompt different forms of understanding of the world, a synthesis is created between old and new.



This is an era where lunar colonisation appears on the horizon; this artwork explores the implication emerging technologies may have on the moon, as the moon's surface in these images warps and fractures after coming into contact with powerful algorithms.

# THE MAN ON THE MOON



SFX Autumn rain against a window, a keyboard typing again, there's soft music playing in the background.

Ayla When we were little, our parents told us stories by the moonlight of ways of wrong and right. They were called the stories of Uncle Moon, if I'm translating quite literally. So, I guess it's natural that the moon became more than a lullaby, it became my comfort. When I'm standing with strangers, feeling like I don't belong in their conversation, I used to look up at the Moon, wonder what the moon thought of making sure there was still a little light during all the inevitable darkness.

SFX ping. Ping. ping.  
The typing stops, and clutter of metal of sorts.

Ayla Okay okay, I'm here, hi, why aren't you asleep?

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Chandra I could ask you the same thing?  
Were you finally writing for that contest?

Ayla Is that why you called me at 2 am? You had me worried for a second.

Chandra No, actually

Ayla What is it? Is everything okay?

by Pavani Konda

A SLOW SILENCE

Ayla Chandra..

Chandra There's something I need to talk to you about Ayla.

Ayla Okay, talk to me then -

Chandra Wow, it's raining hard over there isn't it?

Ayla Tch- don't change the topic, what is it?

Chandra It's about where I'm from.

Ayla This again, we've talked about this before, I don't care where you're from

Chandra It's not like that.

Ayla It's not like that? Oooo is this the part where you tell me I'm being catfished.

Chandra haha, very funny.

Ayla Come on then, out with it.

Chandra I'm nervous.

Ayla Thennn, maybe you should call me when you're ready to tell me, should I just

Chandra I don't live on earth.

SFX Like a cup being set down.  
Ayla What was that?



Chandra (slower) : I don't live on earth

Ayla Did i miss the memo, is it April Fools' day already? And even if it was, a terrible joke by the way.

Chandra Ayla, I'm being serious about this.

Ayla (scoffs) You're being serious, I'm from Mars.

Chandra Did you get a parcel this morning?

Ayla A parcel?

Chandra Yeah, I sent you something, did you get it? Wait, you haven't left the house all day again?

Ayla It's been an exhausting week okay, I was recuperating.

Chandra Righttt, anyways, the parcel, check outside okay?

Ayla Yeah, I'll do it in the morning.

Chandra Ayla now please.

Ayla Jeez okay, you're kind of scaring me though.

Chandra I promise, it's nothing creepy, just a little hard to explain okay, I'll wait.

SFX : Shuffling and feet down the stairs, a door opens, the rain sound increasing before



a wet parcel is picked up and the rain sound softens again, steps run up the stairs.

Chandra It's all -

Ayla It's not that bad, just a bit of rain, wait is it damaged?

Chandra No, it's like a metal case, don't worry. Now, open it please.

Ayla Okay, Mister 'this is not creepy'

SFX Ruffling as Ayla opens the case

Ayla (questioning) It looks like a VR headset?

Chandra It's a little bit more than that. You won't believe me, if I tell you I'm not from Earth right? What if I can show it to you?

Ayla You're not making a lot of sense.

Chandra Just try on the VR set

Ayla (sighs deeply) okay -

SFX The rain and everything stops. A slight beeping noise, like tech coming to life.

Ayla It's just pitch black.

Chandra (chuckles a little) Just wait

SFX Sounds like a few buttons are being pressed and something coming to life

Chandra (awkwardly) Ta-da

SURPRISED SILENCE

Chandra Ayla, say something.

Ayla You're like standing in front of me.  
Wait, can - can I move?

Ayla Oh my god I can, can I -

Chandra Nooo you can't touch me.  
You're still a holograph, sort of

Ayla Wait, so I'm in your living room right now? Wait, where is this place, is it like some digitally rendered space. Oh -

Chandra This is where I live yes, this half of it looks like a living room, but it's my ship and that over there is the -

36 Ayla The moon? YOU LIVE on the Moon

Chandra Stuck. I'm sort of stuck on the Moon.

Ayla I need to sit down. I don't even know how to begin to process it all. You could still be pranking me

Chandra Will you let me explain? Please? And then we can figure out the rest.  
I'm from Earth Ayla, just not the one you live



on. (launches into a kind of storytelling voice) I come from a world, where we can travel across space and time, we're encouraged, if we start training at an early age. And this ship, I got it from my grandpa but something went wrong. I'm not sure what.. free particles, unidentified matter, could've been anything really - and once I crashed here, I figured out soon enough; the Earth I'm looking at... isn't mine.

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Ayla Hey, I know I said I'll listen but I need a minute. So you're an alien? I've known you for five years, surely I'd catch on if you were an alien.. (more to herself) right?

Chandra I'm not technically an alien because I'm still from Earth. I told you just different timelines, parallel universes? You live, where I live on Earth like co-ordinates wise. That's how I found you. I was worried something had happened to my family, but after watching your Earth long enough, I realised it's so different from mine. (pause) You used to talk to me, before I even reached out to you, remember?

Ayla You mean, that window ledge where I used to look up and talk to the Moon all the time.

Chandra Yeah, I know I'm not the Moon but when you looked up and talked ... I just felt a little less trapped here. Then that chat forum happened and we got along, so I kept talking to you -

Ayla (give a gap to breathe) : So let me get this

right - I'll never see you again? I'll lose my best friend?

Chandra I'm sorry I didn't tell you sooner. I didn't know how to or if you would just stop talking to me or if you'd even believe me.

Ayla So what's this right now, like how did you send me something, how am I in space?

Chandra I've been here long enough to know how to get things done on your earth.

Ayla So what, where you guys come from what you live in like year 3k

Chandra : Not quite, but yeah we're more advanced than yours

Ayla That, I can see ...

Ayla (choked up) : So you're really leaving?

Chandra I have to, I can't stay on the Moon forever -

Ayla Yeah, I know it's only rational, you found a way home -

Chandra Hey, look at me. I still have a little bit of time. I need you to promise me you'll be okay Ayla, I want you to know you sort of saved me and kept me going.

Ayla God, you're so sappy. But you know it was a mutual thing. I used to spend all my time shut up like a hermit, crying my eyes

out the minute I came back from any kind of socialisation before I met you.

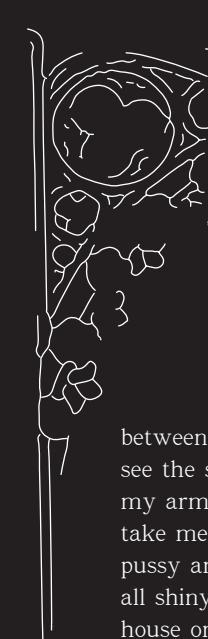
Chandra Ayla

Ayla I know and it's okay, anyways - I finally have my idea for that contest , the real life man on the moon -

Chandra And you'll become a bestselling author. Okay, ask away. Anything you want to know.

THE END





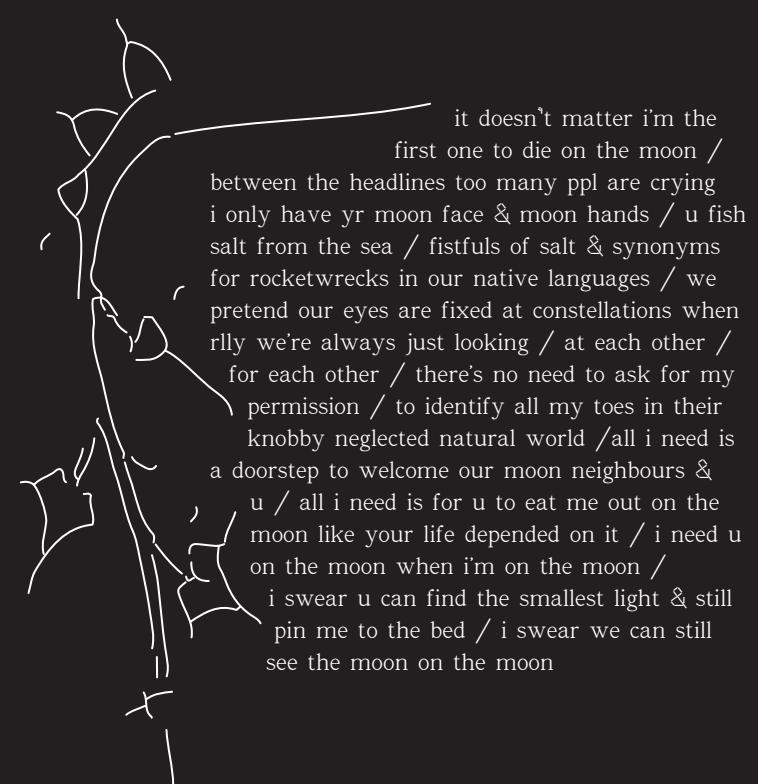
HEY IS IT CHILL WITH  
U IF WE HANG OUT ON  
THE MOON NEXT  
SATURDAY?

after Chen Chen

between the windows the body is not so lucky / i can barely see the stars tonight with yr ass hair fogging the view / i put my arm into the shopping cart & stage scream who wants to take me to space / in the bed you pull a snow globe out of my pussy and call it the moon / you rub it like the genie's lamp all shiny & new & it starts raining somewhere / we'll make a house on the moon / can u imagine our moon garden / moon terrace / moon veggies / mooncakes / moon fish moon rat / i moon into light with my teeth biting

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into our lunar anniversary cake / it's a confession / an apology / an asshat / as a child i hated the moon with its light stealing / the first robber type i knew / today i kiss the roads where the icy light falls / today i mistake every phone call for a cry for help & run away / my mouth is sorry & wide open when u kiss me in my astronaut suit / all the planets fall into my food pipe & the aliens chant our names / i cum with my eyes off-the-grid / there's a cavity in my chest in the shape of a crater / all steamy on the rooftop when the moon's in motion / i relish newton's gravity & i fuck in the absence of it / when the credits roll you're looking at my nipples so round so perfect /



it doesn't matter i'm the first one to die on the moon / between the headlines too many ppl are crying i only have yr moon face & moon hands / u fish salt from the sea / fistfuls of salt & synonyms for rocketwrecks in our native languages / we pretend our eyes are fixed at constellations when rlly we're always just looking / at each other / for each other / there's no need to ask for my permission / to identify all my toes in their knobby neglected natural world / all i need is a doorstep to welcome our moon neighbours & u / all i need is for u to eat me out on the moon like your life depended on it / i need u on the moon when i'm on the moon / i swear u can find the smallest light & still pin me to the bed / i swear we can still see the moon on the moon

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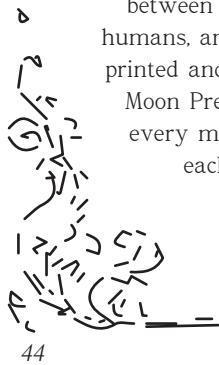
by Tanya "JADE VINE" Singh

# LUNAR REPORT



How does imagining the Moon as a new world give us space to consider culture, the environment, publishing, art, community, and politics in different ways?

Moon Press is an intervention into publishing, creating space for writers, thinkers, and artists to draw connections between the environment, humans, and outer space. As a printed and online publication, Moon Press releases issues every month in line with each full moon.



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