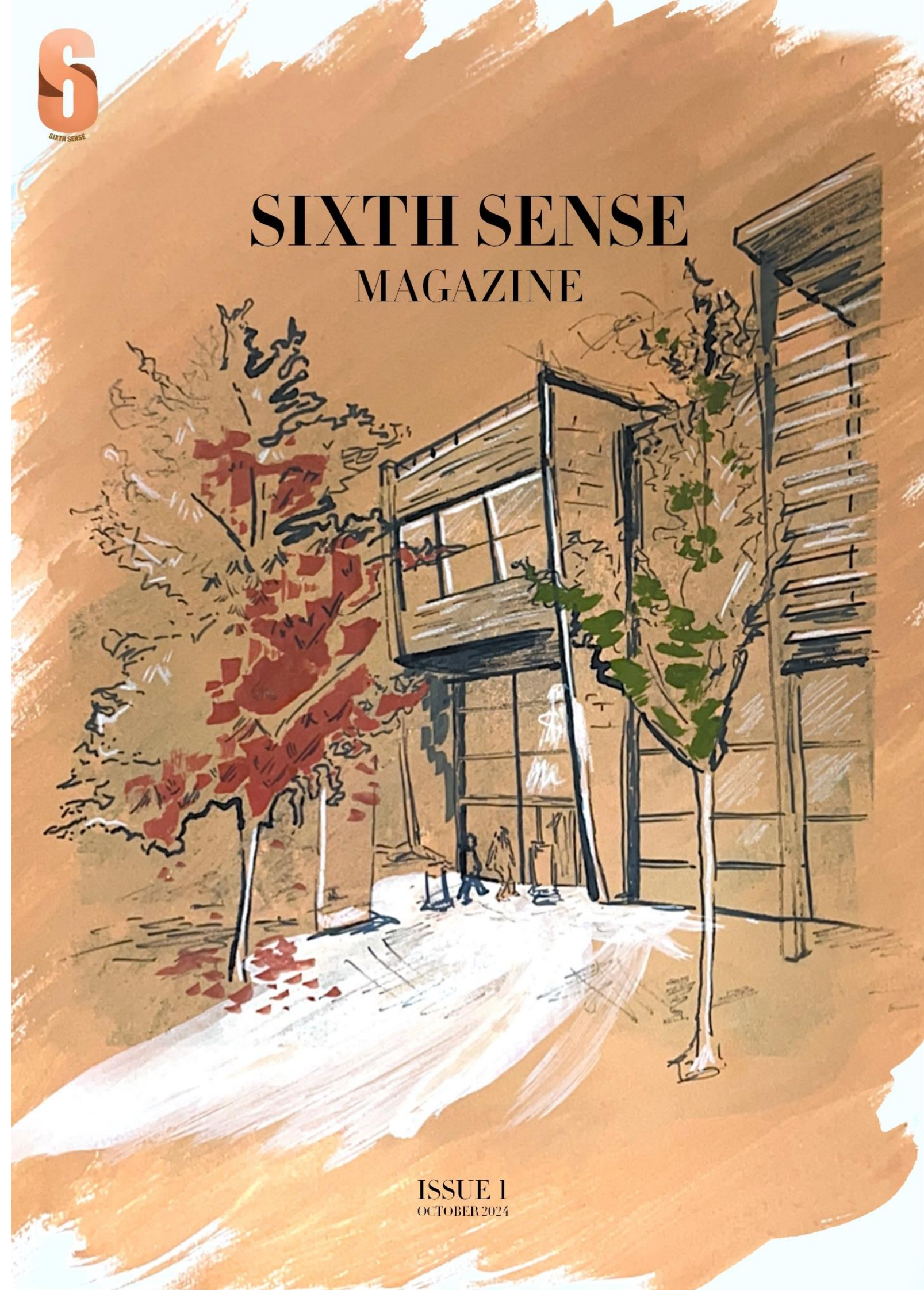




# SIXTH SENSE MAGAZINE



ISSUE 1  
OCTOBER 2024



WELCOME  
to  
BLACKPOOL SIXTH SENSE

**A** Letter from the  
EDITORS

It is with great pleasure that we introduce to you the first edition of this year's Sixth Sense- the magazine is back and unlike you've ever seen it before. This year, our team has decided to take a more innovative approach, transitioning from the limitations of wordpress to our own format which has given us the freedom to experiment with combining our articles with visuals. This reincarnation of Sixth Sense marks a new era for the team, and we are as excited as you are to see where it takes us.

Written by ELLA WITCHER

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*KATY GORDON*  
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# ALL HALLOWS EVE

*The origins of Halloween*

Written by BELLA BEATTON

Halloween is an incredible holiday, full of trick-or-treating, costumes, pumpkin carving, apple bobbing, and haunted houses.

Making jack-o'-lanterns began in Ireland where they would hollow out turnips with grotesque faces, used to ward off evil spirits

## Celtic Origins:

Halloween is believed to have originated 2,000 years ago by the Celts (a collection of tribes mainly in Britain, Ireland, and France). The Celts celebrated their new year on November 1, and so Halloween - Samhain as they called it - marked the final day of summer and the harvest.

Winter was a time associated with death (as expected because the Celts followed Paganism, using water and magic to 'heal' their illnesses). They believed that, on Halloween, the boundary between the worlds of the living and the dead became blurred so the ghosts returned to Earth for that night. The Celts thought that the spirits could make it easier to predict the future, and these prophecies were a great comfort during the long, dark ancient British winters.

Druids built huge bonfires and sacrificed animals and crops to the Celtic deities. The Celts often wore costumes during this celebration (usually animal heads and skins) and attempted fortune-telling. After this, they relit their hearth fires from the bonfire to help protect them during the upcoming winter.

By the year 43, the Roman Empire had conquered most of the Celtic territory and combined their festivals with the Celtic celebration of Samhain:

Feralia is a day where the Romans commemorated the passing of the dead.

A festival to Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. Her symbol was the apple, which probably explains the apple-bobbing tradition we have nowadays.

## Allhallowtide:

Allhallowtide was a triduum (a religious observance that lasted three days) that consisted of All Hallows' Eve on October 31, All Hallows' Day on November 1, and All Souls' Day on November 2.

All Saints' Day was also called 'All-Hallows Day,' and the traditional night before it was 'All-Hallows Eve' - celebrated similarly to Samhain (with big bonfires, parades, and dressing up as saints, angels, and devils). Eventually, the holiday became Halloween. In order to prevent being recognised by an evil soul, people would wear costumes to disguise their identities (because, similarly to Samhain, some believed that Christian souls in purgatory came to the material world for the night).





All Saints' Day was in honour of Christian martyrs and moved from May 13 to November 1 in 837 AD. By the end of the 9th century, Christianity had spread into Celtic lands and blended with Celtic rites. Trick-or-treating began in Medieval England on All Saints' Day when Christians would go door to door offering a prayer in exchange for food - usually a cake.

All Souls' Day was created in 1000 AD to honour the dead (it was believed that the church was attempting to replace the Celtic festival with a related, church-sanctioned holiday). Family members attended mass, visited the graves of their deceased loved ones, and placed flowers or candles there.

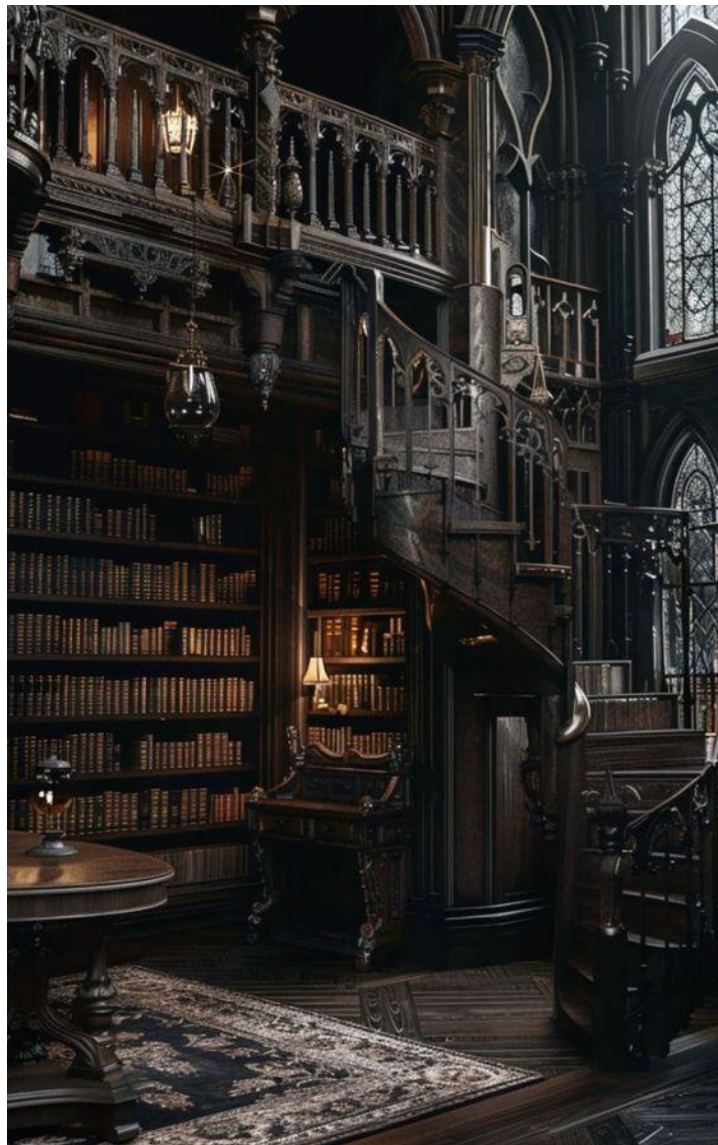
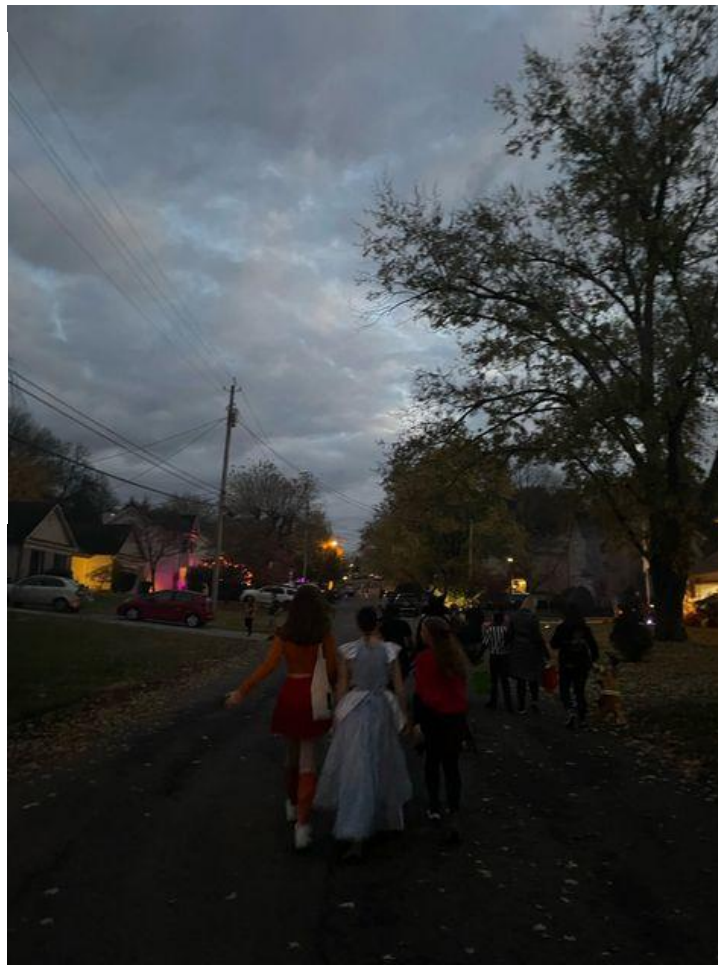
## The impact of the BLAIR WITCH PROJECT

Written by LILY SCOTT

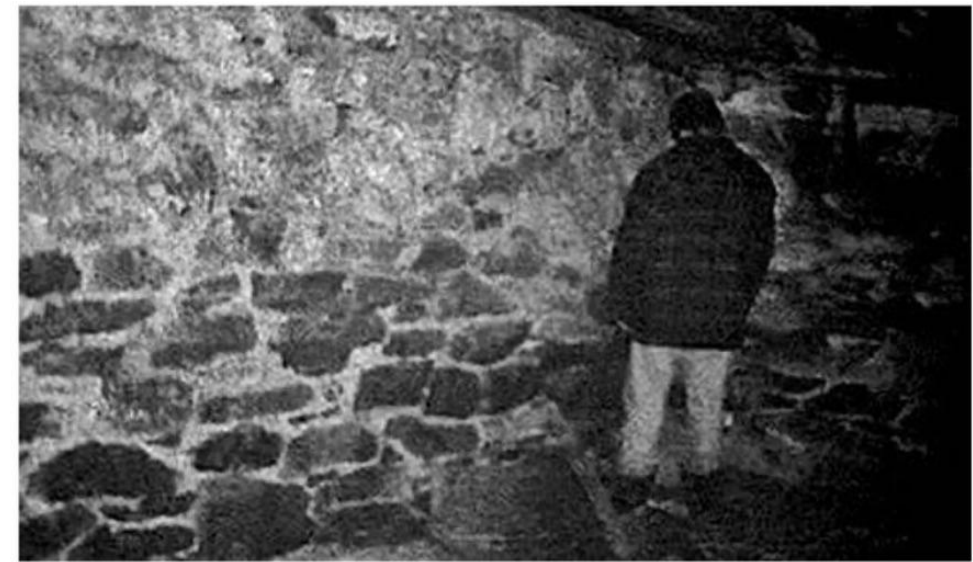
The Blair Witch Project, officially released in 1999, terrified millions internationally through its realistic approach to horror, and popularised a movement of found-footage films, including Paranormal Activity (2007), REC (2007), Cloverfield (2008) and Chronicle (2012).

The Blair Witch Project adopts a found-footage style, depicting the final days of three student filmmakers, all captured on newly discovered tapes. This film was initially premiered on January 23, 1999, at the Sundance Film Festival, and blurred the lines between reality and fiction for the viewers. The film left the audience uncertain of the genuinity of what they had just viewed as it claimed to be real found footage of these supposedly "missing" individuals, and was eerily realistic. It left them questioning whether these people were really dead, or if they faced a worse fate.

The film itself advertised itself to be true found-footage; to the point where families of the actors were convinced. Directors Daniel Myrick and Eduardo Sánchez specifically selected actors for the project who were unknown, casting recognisable actors would have ruined the immersive experience they wanted the viewers to have. The performance of the actors was notably realistic, this is due to the fact that they were truly terrorised by the directors. The fear acted out by the actors was genuine, as the directors continuously rattled their tents at night, leaving the actors delirious and sleep deprived.



The Blair Witch Project was not the first film to follow the found-footage style, yet it certainly popularised it. Its effective use of grainy footage and low quality audio contributes to an eerie sense of realism that's hard to differentiate between true reality. The low quality aesthetic of the film likened it to that of home video tapes, further separating the film from the notable fakeness of big studio Hollywood cinema. The Blair Witch Project's miniscule shoestring budget of \$35,000 in comparison to its profit of over \$248 million at the worldwide box office earned them a Guinness World Record for biggest box-office returns



Moreover, the marketing of the film generated both buzz and horror amongst audiences. A key aspect of their marketing was creating an atmosphere of realism to this story. They passed out missing person leaflets, shared photos from the police reports, and even went as far as having fake news stories written up by small local papers about the missing persons and their whereabouts. The word-of-mouth strategy generated the exact effect the film needed for its immense success, and overall is what led to its significant impact.





# AMERICA DIARIES:

## *SUTTON TRUST US PROGRAMME*

Written by JENNA LABAND  
Photographs by JENNA LABAND

The Sutton Trust has completely transformed my life.

A strong statement, maybe, but one I believe factual nonetheless. Until this time last year (October 2023, my first year of college) I had no idea what the Sutton trust was, what they did, nor the fact they would be taking me to America in less than a year- completely for free.

I have to say, I left it a while before I began a full application. My mum couldn't quite believe that it was real and I procrastinated the lengthy application. Slowly but surely, I made it through the personal details section, extracurricular section, short essays and video interview (even though on my final review of my application I completely scrapped and restarted my video!), and I have never been so glad that I chanced sending that application.

Fast forward to March, and the trajectory of summer 2024, and 2024 as a whole completely changed for me. "Congratulations!" dropped into my email box and I couldn't quite wrap my head around the fact that in a few months I would be flying 8 hours to a new continent, with 150 people who I haven't even met yet.

But what is the Sutton Trust? The Sutton Trust is a UK based charity which focuses on improving social mobility by addressing educational disadvantage. It achieves this by receiving funding and donations in order to connect students with leading universities and careers. The Sutton Trust offers many different programmes and schemes like the 'pathways to professions' or other 'summer schools', based at UK universities. However, The Sutton Trust US programme could be argued as one of the most competitive programs that they offer, with 1309 applicants for cohort 13 and only 150 places available (over 8x oversubscribed!).

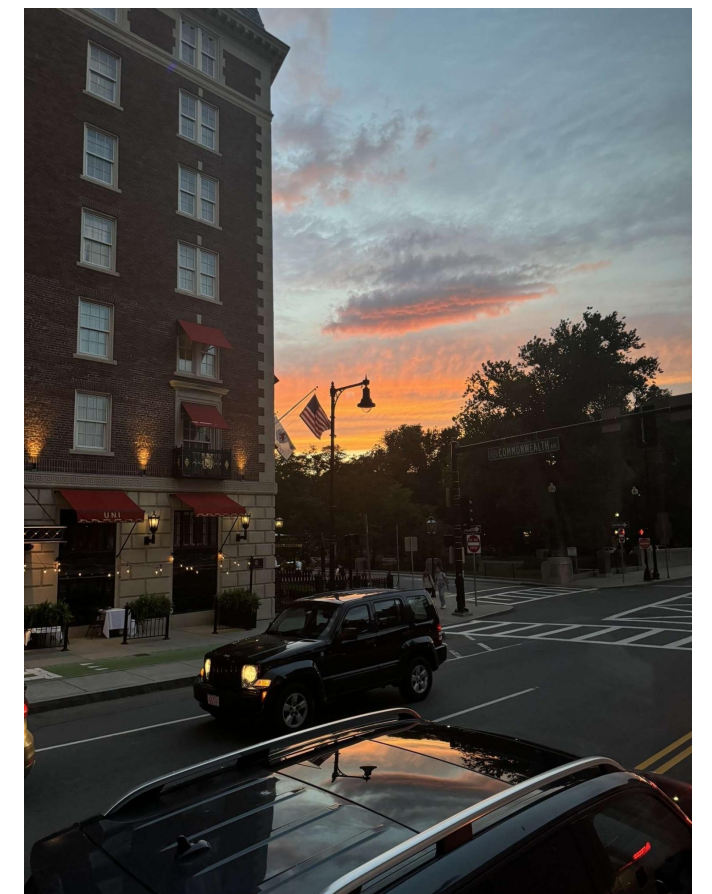
Whilst this seems challenging, it is most certainly attainable with the right amount of work and dedication!

As part of the programme, we completed several 'modules' which prepared us all for the experience of applying to university in the US (VERY different to UCAS!, so this was a shock). This included 'about me's', extracurricular rankings, university research, essay writing workshops and more! These would be set on a weekly basis and were made all the more worth it by the 3 residential's: April 'Nottingham' Res, June 'Virtual Res' and the main event: The US weeks!

April was the first time I had met everyone on the programme during a residential at Nottingham university where we spent 2 days doing team activities and attending information sessions and lectures centred around study abroad. With sessions delivered by program alumni and our team leaders from the previous cohort, we weren't short of sources to answer any questions we may have had.

US week's came along faster than I could imagine. We were split into 3rds: New York week, Philadelphia week and Boston 'best' week; each attending different universities, staying at different campuses and different cultural activities. Of course, Boston 'best' week completely lived up to its name - summarising the best summer of my life will be near impossible but I'll certainly try my best!

3 hour trains from Blackpool to London Heathrow, 8 hour flight to Boston Logan and an interesting trip through US customs with 50 of us and our Sutton Trust branded yellow backpacks (see cover photo). Arriving at our home for the week, the MIT dorms, felt completely surreal and being assigned my roommate and quickly making a new best friend. The most surreal 24 hours. Over the course of the week, we visited approximately 7 universities, each with campus tours and information sessions with the admissions officers who decide who gets accepted!







“The whole week  
*felt like a*  
**MOVIE**”

JENNA LABAND



The whole week felt like a movie, from the American breakfasts and food, to the campuses that only exist in Netflix shows. Each campus was so unique and different, MIT in central Boston, Harvard just round the corner, Bowdoin 2 states along (Maine) and Dartmouth and the college town in between (New Hampshire). Yes, 3 states in a week was tiring at times, but the excitement and adrenaline powered us through. Alongside visiting the universities, the programme both paid and made time for an amazing range of cultural activities too. Walks and drives around downtown Boston educated us on both the city's culture and history - including stumbling into a robot dog?! We visited museums at MIT and Harvard, as well as the 'Tea Party' ships experience, as well as the highly requested hour-long trip to the mall and Target where we spent copious amounts on souvenirs and American sweets.

One of the highlights for us all, was attending the final night of the Boston Red Sox vs The New York Yankees playoffs. The atmosphere was incredible, we all got dressed up with face paint and glitters to really blend in with the extremely passionate locals, a disguise which lasted all of 30 minutes when a local realised none of us actually knew the rules of baseball. Once again, this experience just made the entire week feel like a movie all over again and again.

## “The *Sutton Trust* has COMPLETELY transformed my life”

This then led us to the final day of Boston and Philadelphia weeks and the first day of New York week, the bespoke Sutton Trust admissions fair at Harvard University. The Sutton Trust constructs this fair annually, exclusively for students of the cohort, with approximately 30 representatives from institutions all over the USA, some which travelled hours simply to speak to us about our future prospects and help us decide if their university was the right 'fit' for us. All 150 of us being reunited with each other at one of the most internationally renowned universities was an absolutely insane way to end the week and we most certainly did not want to leave! I miss them all so much to this day, but knowing I have friends all over the UK is such an incredible feeling. I honestly feel like I have only touched the surface of what an incredible experience this program is - remember- this was ALL FREE! Travel, events, accommodation, food, activities and campus visits. But if you had asked me a few years ago, I would have never believed in myself enough to even apply, or think I was good enough in the first place. The program has truly grown my confidence more than I could ever imagine, it pushes you out of your comfort zone in ways that better you as a person whether you decide to continue your application for international study or not. I also believe it is a true testament to the saying 'if you don't ask you don't get', sometimes it just takes a bit of self belief in sending that application and I feel I am just one example of what can happen as a result.

Year 12, I encourage you to research this opportunity even if you're still slightly uncertain. Simply research the criteria and think of sending in an application as you'll never know unless you give it a shot. \

Jenna Laband



## ALISHA BICAKU: *DRUMS AND DREAMS*

Written by ELLA WITCHER  
Photographs by EMILY GILLESPIE

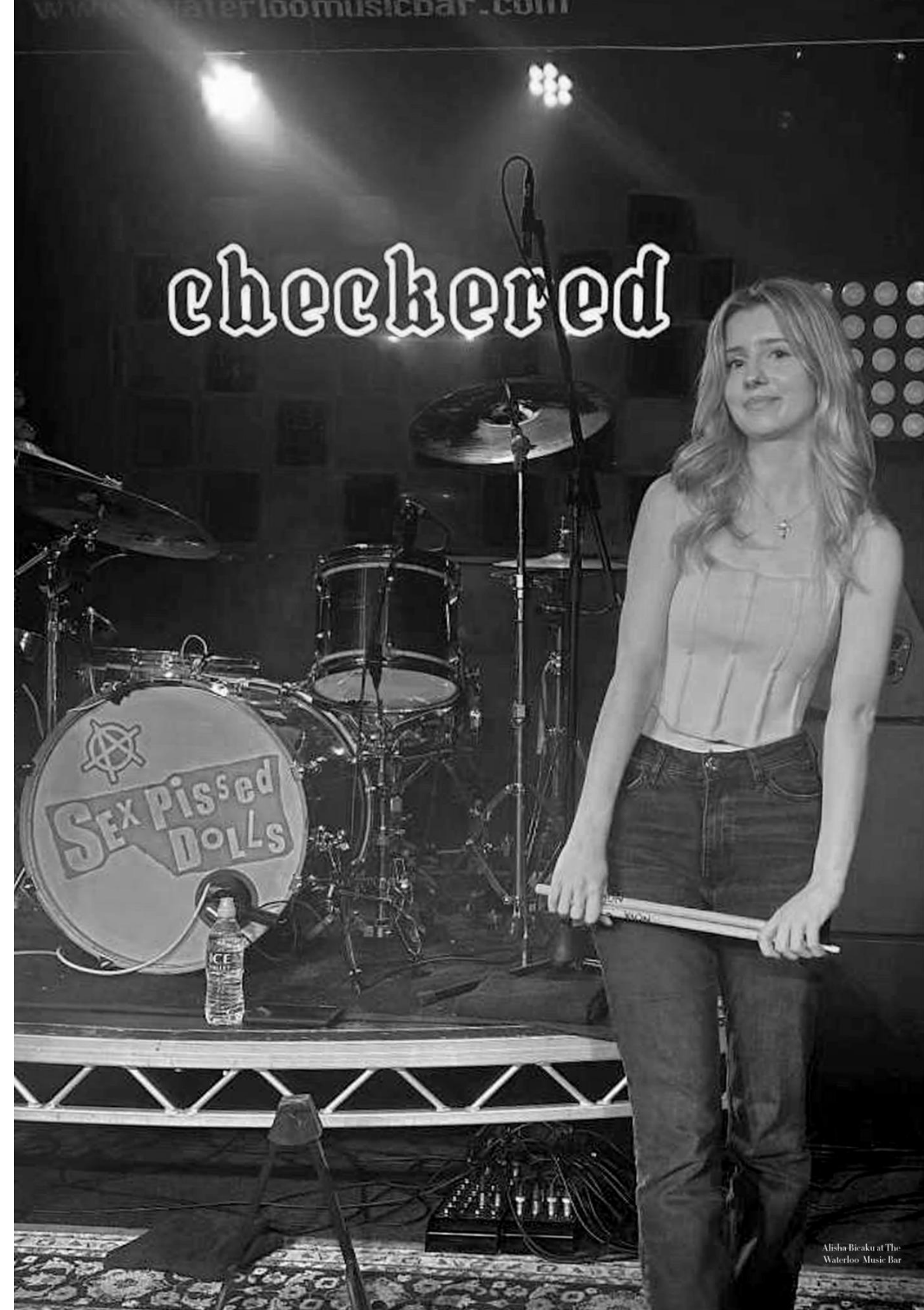


Many of us have experimented with playing an instrument before - whether it was guitar or piano, flute or cello, almost all of these attempts can be defined simply as short-lived - but not for Alisha. From first picking up the drumsticks in 2019 to recently performing for an audience of almost a thousand at the light switch on, she has decided to share her musical experience with Sixth Sense, so here it is: Alisha Bicaku on drums and dreams.

Opening our interview, we began at the very start from the determining day when Alisha was told by her friend that her school was offering free drum lessons and, as she recounts, 'went to try it out and was the only one who stuck with it'. From this point, her passion for drums grew with her as she progressed through high school, however this journey was not always smooth sailing; when asked how her musical endeavours mixed with academia, she admits studying music for her GCSEs understandably 'took the passion away a little bit'. And whilst Alisha may not have yet perfected the balance between music and everyday responsibilities of teenage life, the transition from school to college has helped her to regain her rhythm, particularly as the course is assessed purely on her musical ability.

*"If you've had a bad day,  
you can just  
beat it out  
on the drums"*  
Alisha Bicaku

Keen to uncover more about her career so far, we asked Alisha about her band, Checkered, which she had been an integral member of until its recent disbandment. Similar to her fateful discovery of the drums, the story of her introduction to the band seems equally written in the stars. Smiling at the memory, she tells us how, when her friend Sophie was asked to find a drummer last minute, it was Alisha who she turned to, and she 'started playing and it stuck for two years.' The band itself was born from a local music academy, and Alisha refers to it fondly as a 'good starting point' to her career, highlighting the value of recognition in the music industry which makes the years of unpaid gigs more than worth it. On the breakdown of the band, she told us that naturally people left over the years, and that despite thoroughly enjoying her experience, if she was asked to join another band soon she 'wouldn't know what [she'd] say to be honest', reminding us that 'being in a band is a big commitment, [with] balancing college it might clash'. Despite this phase of her career being over, her time on the drums is most certainly not, and she plans to continue playing at her academy.











However, before this stage of her drumming journey drew to a close, the band performed their largest and most impressive gig yet, supporting at the Blackpool light switch on. This was a massive milestone in the band's growth- according to Alisha attendance at their previous gigs had typically been a couple hundred, as dramatic contrast to the massive audience that congregated on the Comedy Carpet on the 30th of August. Before the set, Alisha admits to suffering from last minute nerves- 'we'd talked about it for so long, and when it actually came to it, I was thinking of everything that could go wrong' she confesses, revealing the vulnerability that comes with sharing music with such a multitude of people. However, she was able to stay grounded from support from her loved ones, recounting that she 'saw [her] friends and family and boyfriend in the crowd and knew everything was going to be fine' and that she was 'just playing in front of them'. It was this harmony between her music and the emotional support of her friends that allowed her to 'go full out' and become truly immersed in the moment, as she realised that 'you only get one of these moments'- but we think there will be many more of these experiences to come for Alisha Bicaku.

When asked about her future plans, she remains delightfully enigmatic and tells us that her ideas about a career as a drummer 'change all the time' but, no matter where her life takes her she plans to leave the door open to music, affirming that 'if she gets a call for a gig she'll always take it'. Whether her path lies in the music industry or elsewhere, one thing is clear: Alisha's future is bright.



“YOU ONLY  
GET *ONE*  
OF THESE  
*MOMENTS*”

Alisha Bicaku for b6sense magazine



# FEMINISM and you.

Written by LOWRI-MIEL JINKS



Not many would second guess on calling themselves a feminist...at least I hope.  
But I wouldn't say it's out of the water to guess that most have not delved deeper into the subcultures as I will today.

Now I'm a student with a packed schedule and well, even if I wasn't, I would not have the time of the day to go through all of the strands included within feminism. So here's my short introduction to the main three:

## Radical Feminism

A key concept and fundamental belief of radical feminism is the aversion of the patriarchal society which affects all things political and societal, in their eyes. This belief entails that with the abolishment of the patriarchy comes the liberation of women. They view traditional households as oppressing and discouraging for women as it 'holds them back' from opportunities to better or establish their careers. They also believe that in following this life pattern you are strengthening the patriarchy. Now it would be irresponsible of me to mention their values without mentioning their very many criticisms, after all I'm here to convey a non-biased outlet for you. The main criticism from the public today, referring to the current view that most radical feminists uphold, is that their ideologies seem to exclude and marginalise people of colour, sex workers and transgender women. As I included the opposition they feel for sex workers I feel the need to include that Andrea Dworkin was a radical and I feel this is portrayed heavily within her works.

## Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminists differ from the above in many ways with a colossal outlier is the belief that the political and legal structures can be adjusted rather than stripped and rebuilt. They believe through educational and legal change equality for women will blossom. They aim for equal pay, education opportunities and sexual freedoms and as homes can be seen as a structure of both genders equality should be seen there too. However it could be argued that liberal feminists are to complying with male dominance and clean up after their effects rather than turning to fix the cause. They have been seen to generalise and have gained the name 'white feminists' as they never really dive deeper into the global issues and rather looks to bettering life for women in the western world.

## Socialist feminism

They believe that the liberation of women can be found in the social and economic equality of society. It directly links women's inequality to capitalism which uses women as vices for profit and takes the cost for the patriarchy. They advocate for a transformation of social and economic systems in the aim of dismantling the patriarchy and capitalism. However this can be critiqued to view class struggle too heavily and overlook the basis of gender equality. They also are criticised for their optimistic view of the ending of capitalism, bringing down the set gender norms and engraved sexism in most cultures and societies.

I'd like to finish off this article with a few shocking statistics to cover and give recognition as to why feminism is needed today, a phrase that is often portrayed as false.

1 in 30 women are sexually assaulted each year in the UK  
130 million girls are denied the right to education around the world  
1 in 4 women experience domestic abuse in the UK

**Help: National Domestic Abuse Helpline- 0808 2000 247**





*The return of*  
**NOSFERATU**

Written by KATY GORDON





“*Sunrise is far away* and during the day I have to find sleep, my friend”

- Count Orlok

On Christmas day in the US, and on the 3rd of January over here, a horror film one hundred and two years in the making will be released to the public. 'Nosferatu' (2024), directed by Robert Eggers is a remake of the controversial yet significant original directed by F.W. Murnau of the same name. The German silent film, released in 1922, revolutionised the emerging horror genre, not just at the time but for decades to come and its impact can still be felt over a century later. Even popular vampire films such as 'Twilight' (2008) and 'Interview with the Vampire' (1994) can be traced back to this experimental, early film. However, it isn't just stories about vampires that were affected by 'Nosferatu'; other revolutionary horror films such as 'Psycho' (1960) use similar techniques to scare the audience, like the shadow behind the curtain in the infamous shower scene

Although, it was very nearly possible that 'Nosferatu' would have been forgotten completely. In 1924, Bram Stoker's widow reached an agreement with the studio behind the film, in which all copies were to be destroyed due to claims of copyright infringement. Undeniably, 'Nosferatu' was somewhat of an (unauthorised) adaption of the 1897 novel 'Dracula', but changes were introduced that transformed the character type of the vampire forever, such as this film being the first time a vampire could die from sunlight exposure, which has now become a trope within the sub-genre. Luckily, some copies

The 2024 remake, starring Bill Skarsgård as Count Orlock and Lily Rose Depp as Ellen Hutter, marks the possible return of horror classics that built the genre. For the past decade, horror has focused on slashers and the paranormal, with franchises such as 'Terrifier', 'The Conjuring' and 'Scream' dominating the industry and most of the films intended to scare and unsettle audiences this year have fallen into these categories, like 'Longlegs' or 'The Substance'. This means, while these stories are still great, horror as a genre is due a shift. Just like regular trends, film acts on a pendulum. Robert Eggers, in reference to his remake in an interview for Total Film, asked that "We've gone all the way to Edward Cullen, where vampires are not scary. So, how do we go in the complete opposite direction of that?" It isn't just the classic vampire that's returning; Frankenstein's monster is returning to popular culture. 'Lisa Frankenstein', released in February, is on its way to becoming a cult classic, following in the footsteps of 'Jennifer's Body' (2009), also written by Diablo Cody. In addition, the upcoming Netflix adaptation of 'Frankenstein' stars rising actor Jacob Elordi and recent horror icon Mia Goth, proving





# Tolkien and Mythology

Written by ELEANOR MAGUIRE





I do not profess to be an expert on mythology. Nor do I claim to have extensive knowledge of language construction or for that matter the history of Middle Earth or its peoples. However, I am obsessed with Tolkien. It is not with any arrogance that I claim to have a good knowledge of Middle Earth; I have spent too many hours pouring over the Lord of the Rings appendices, the Silmarillion and the Unfinished Tales (amongst others), but there are people out there who have dedicated their lives to Tolkien's work. Who knows it could still happen to me yet!

Tolkienian influences on literature are visible today and the world he created immortalised in our culture. But there are two particular aspects of the professor's work which intrigue me most: mythological influences and linguistics. His utilisation of the latter indelibly altered the process of composing literature; Tolkien dedicated himself to the creation of numerous languages which in turn inspired his writing, not the other way around. Moreover, the sheer number of languages Tolkien created, Sindarin, Quenya and the infamous Black Speech being just a few examples, has cemented his legacy in both the literature and linguistic sectors. No doubt I will dedicate a future article to Tolkienian language, but presently I want to focus on my other fascination regarding Tolkien's work: his manipulation of Norse mythology.



You will often see The Lord of the Rings described as a mythology. Indeed, Peter Jackson - renowned for his film adaptations of Tolkien's work - described the books as such rather than a fantasy narrative. On this basis, I have listed below four key influences from the Lord of the Rings which can be traced back to Norse mythology. It is also worth mentioning that if you're a fan of Marvel, then this is going to become quite strange, quite quickly - you'll see what I mean.

### Middle Earth/Midgard

Hosting the events of the Lord of the Rings and The Hobbit, Middle Earth is the most famous setting created by Tolkien and supposedly takes inspiration from Midgard, the realm created by the God Odin - a key figure in Norse myth. Allegedly, Odin would protect the men on Midgard from his kingdom, Asgard, and this structure is very similar to that which we see in Middle Earth with the Valar (the fourteen elven gods) watching over Middle-Earth from Valinor. However, unlike Odin's Asgard, Tolkien's Valar noticeably lack a rainbow coloured bridge connecting them to Middle Earth. Pity.

### The Ring of Power/The cursed ring Andvaranaut

Constituting the basics of a rather complicated story involving the skinning of an otter who happens to be the son of dwarven king, Loki (yes, the Loki we all know and love) is given a cursed ring which turns the aforementioned dwarven king mad. This king is then murdered by one of his sons hinting at a similarly bloody history to that which accompanies Sauron's ring. Interestingly, the son guilty of parricide shapeshifts into a dragon so that he might protect the ring and a similar approach is taken by Tolkien in his depiction of Smaug the Dragon in Erebor.

### The Elves and the Dwarves/The Light Elves and Dark Elves

In Norse mythology the light elves are said to be angelic beings who are difficult to distinguish from the gods themselves and in Middle Earth Tolkien's elves carry a similar status after being created first by the Valar. According to the Silmarillion, the dwarves were created next and then finally men. The Dark Elves were said to live underground where they were renowned as master blacksmiths, clearly Tolkien's dwarves were made to resemble such beings.

### Gandalf/Odin

Known as Mithrandir by the elves and Tharkûn by the dwarves, Gandalf is probably the most famous of Tolkien's characters, but we can trace his creation back to Norse mythology through the god: Odin. Odin regularly disguised himself as an old man with a beard and a hat, so that he might wander among the mortals and of course Gandalf also takes this form whilst aiding the inhabitants of Middle Earth. It is worth noting that Gandalf, unlike Odin, was never a God, but a Maiar.





These points demonstrate that Tolkien was certainly inspired by Norse Mythology and incorporated certain concepts and character traits into his books. In the 1920s, Tolkien founded the Leeds Viking Club to discuss Germanic languages and culture, emphasising his dedication and passion for this mythological strand. Whether such influences detract from the quality of Tolkien's work is of course subjective, but the way in which Tolkien manipulated these tales and utilised his experience in academia to mould them into his own history of Middle Earth is inspiring. Tolkien didn't just create a narrative, but his own mythology, one to replace that lost during the Norman invasion of 1066 and one that has since been ingrained into English culture.

How dare anyone complain that there are too many film adaptations!

Happy Halloween!

Le Hannon





Cover illustrated by MATTHEW DINSDALE  
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