

PHANTASMAL PRESENTS

SLASHER

MINI MAG

ISSSUE 1

ART & ARTICLES



A Note From the Editor

Hello and welcome to Phantasmal's first mini magazine. Now, I have to admit that this article is coming out later than expected, but as you can assume, Halloween is quite a busy month for us! So we have put together a spooky gift to help soften the blow of Halloween 2026 coming to an end; however, let's not forget that with Christmas comes SPIRITS! And I'm talking about the scary kind! We will be coming out with a winter watchlist that you can tick off as you go through the chilling months ahead! The frights might just warm you up!

For this mini magazine, I have gathered together a light bite of horror artists from across the globe to share their practices with you! As you know, this month's theme is Slasher, so this means... lots of fake blood and guts ahead!

As horror lovers, we've all had that thought: 'Am I seriously so fucked up that I enjoy seeing MOSTLY innocent people get brutally chased and murdered?' Well, we are going to dip into that here! Do you also wonder what Slashers tell us about American culture, feminism and serial killers? Well, we've got artist and writer Nicole Gayler to tell us a bit more on the subject. Please enjoy our very first mini mag!

Daisy-Drew Smith
Director &
Chief editor

“Dead, Wrapped in Plastic”

Lily Cuthbertson explores the relationship between cinema, identity, memory and place.

LILY CUTHBERTSON

My practice explores the relationship between cinema, identity, memory and place. Drawing from the films and stories that have shaped me, I use photography and moving images to inhabit fictional worlds, characters and visual languages, exploring why these stories hold such significance in my life. Through staging, performance and the familiar landscapes of my hometown, I bring imagined worlds into everyday spaces, blurring the boundaries between fiction and reality. My work is an ongoing attempt to understand my desire for escapism, and how the images and stories I return to become a way of understanding myself and the world around me.

escapism

Cinema, definitely. It's always been a form of escapism for me, and I think my practice has grown out of wanting to step inside the films and stories that mean something to me. I'm interested in what it is about certain images, characters and worlds that makes them stay with you, and how I can use my own work to explore that connection.

-Lily Cuthbertson

“I don't think there is anything I love more than scary movies.”

They have shaped my identity for as long as I remember, and I truly see it to be one of the most expansive and meaningful genres within cinema. My favourite film of all time, as well as being my favourite scary movie is The Shining. A masterclass in horror and it’s one of those films that whilst being terrifying, just makes me happy when I watch it, as I’m sure anyone would say about their favourite movie. But apart from The Shining, some of my other favourite scary movies include Rosemary’s Baby, A Nightmare On Elm Street, The Vanishing, The Thing, Possession, The Texas Chainsaw Massacre, just to name a few.

-Lily Cuthbertson

Christopher Watiker

I started photography after seeing a few cinematic videos and short films. I feel like every person I follow has such a unique vibe and process when it comes to their work. I just love trying to find my own style and way through a photoshoot.

Do you like scary movies?

I love scary movies! I have a ton of favorites, but my favorite from this year has to be Backrooms. A24 did such a great job along with Kane Parsons to bring a universe alive based on one photo.

What Slashers Tell us about American Culture, Feminism and Serial Killers.

BEHIND THE MASK

Walk into any fancy-dress store in October, and the chances are that you will see the following: a weathered hockey mask, a glove with razor-sharp claws and a ghostly black and white face. These costumes, all knock-offs of iconic slasher film villains, have something in common — they have been popular for decades. It is widely acknowledged amongst fans and scholars that horror reflects our cultural and societal fears. This begs the question, why have these slasher villains lasted the test of time?

To understand how the slasher film became such a cultural phenomenon, we must return to 1978. On one unremarkable day, designer Tommy Lee Wallace stepped into a costume shop on Hollywood Boulevard, tasked with bringing to life a killer for an upcoming independent film. He walked out wielding a mask of Star Trek's Captain Kirk. Later, the mask was turned inside out, spray-painted white and stripped of its familiar features to become the haunting face of Michael Myers.

The film, John Carpenter's Halloween (1978), was an unexpected box office hit. To this day, it remains one of the most profitable independent horror films ever created. Its raging success was to usher forth "the golden age" of slasher films, with the likes of Friday the 13th (1980) and My Bloody Valentine (1981) following in Carpenter's footsteps. What followed was a decade of cinematic stabbings, stalking and knife-wielding killers.

The setting was central to the success of golden age slashers.

Killers stalked suburban neighbourhoods, nondescript high schools and summer camps. Picture Michael Myers stalking Haddonfield and Jason Voorhees at Camp Crystal Lake. As a British viewer, I watch the killer infiltrate the seemingly idyllic American life. Scholars have long argued that this reflects the political landscape of the time, which was marked by economic insecurity and distrust following the Nixon administration and the Vietnam war. However, I would argue that there is a more on-the-nose explanation for the growing fascination withnslashers: the wave of high-profile serial killers terrorising 70's America.

In 1977, just one year before the groundbreaking success of Halloween, notorious murderer Ted Bundy escaped from custody. That same year, the Son of Sam case dominated headlines as David Berkowitz continued a string of attacks in New York City.



This media maelstrom continued into the 80's as more prolific serial killers continued to emerge bringing the threat of violence to the forefront of the American consciousness. Hitchiking became a particular focus of public concern following a string of targetted murders. Notorious killer Ed Kemper, when asked his greatest contribution to society, replied, "I taught women not to hitchhike" (Dary Matera, 2021).. This victim blaming and growing public fear was reflected in slashers such as Friday the 13th (1980) in which Annie Phillips is chased through the woods and killed after accepting a ride from a stranger.

It is impossible to discuss slashers without acknowledging the role of women. Although male victims were killed just as frequently, violence against women was central to the films, receiving markedly more screen time and focus. Going further, femininity was punished: women with androgynous traits were more likely to survive the film. This further implicates the serial killing crisis of the 70's, where women were disproportionately murdered. From this, the concept of the "final girl" arose. The final girl is the last surviving woman, the one who emerges blood-stained but alive. Of course, she has her own set of tropes. Arwen Hansen put it best: she is "female, bookish and virginal" (Hansen, A.G., 2025). She is attractive but not promiscuous, typically with androgynous traits. When we first meet iconic Halloween final girl Laurie Strode, she is wearing a long skirt and carrying books under her arm, signalling her virtuous, pure nature. But why must the final girl be chaste?

It has long been argued that, to be a sexually promiscuous woman in a slasher is to seal your fate as a victim. This trope has often been linked to conservative beliefs about women's sexualities and cultural anxieties around changing gender roles. However, the link between female sexuality and the serial killing crisis has been largely unexplored. Tragically, women's sexuality was implicated in serial murders of the time, as female sex workers were disproportionately murdered16 and blamed for their own deaths.

Given their focus on women's suffering, it is easy to see why there is a longstanding assumption that slashers are created for the male gaze. In reality, 55% of viewers under the age of 17 who watched Halloween and Friday the 13th were girls (Nowell, R, 2011). Why, with so many films that depicted their fears, were young women drawn to slashers? The answer may lie in the predictability of slasher films. The conventions that define the genre are formulaic. The final girl trope, although orbiting the questionable gender roles of the time, exemplifies this: be chaste, be androgynous and you can escape the killer. But predictability is safe. The audience could confront their fears in a controlled way, an idea that is not without precedent in horror literature.

Why, with so many films that depicted their fears, were young women drawn to slashers? The answer may lie in the predictability of slasher films. The conventions that define the genre are formulaic. The final girl trope, although orbiting the questionable gender roles of the time, exemplifies this: be chaste, be androgynous and you can escape the killer. But predictability is safe. The audience could confront their fears in a controlled way, an idea that is not without precedent in horror literature.

However, the very predictability that gave the slashers their charm may also have been their downfall. 1984 marked the end of the golden age. The market had become oversaturated, the public had tired of predictability and major studios began to abandon the genre. This continued until 1996, when Ghostface joined the pantheon of slasher villains with the release of Wes Craven's Scream. This movie had all the hallmarks of a classic (suburban neighbourhood, masked killer, stalking, a knife and a final girl) with one key difference: it was self-aware. The characters themselves brazenly spoke of the conventions of the genre. Its meta take on the **"rules"** that one must follow in order to survive is best explained by the character Randy: "There are certain RULES that one must abide by in order to successfully survive a horror movie. For instance, number one: you can never have sex... Number two: you can never drink or do drugs... " (Scream, 1996).

Why were the 90s the perfect spawning ground for this meta-slasher's resurgance in popularity? From a cultural perspective, the 90's were a period of relative peace and safety for Americans. Scream exemplified this by taking the predictability of slasher's one step further. The audience were now in on the joke, removing us further from the danger. In this way, it is unsurprising that this movie went on to become a comfort movie for so many horror fans. At the same time, Western culture was experiencing a new wave of feminism as women reclaimed their sexual expression. Jessa Crispin captured this era of sex-positivity when she said,

"In the 1990s, feminism took the form of a vibrator".

Jessa Crispin (Beyond vibrator Feminism, 2017)

In Scream, final girl Sydney Prescott embodies this progression when she breaks rule number one and has sex with her boyfriend and still survives the film.

In more recent years, slashers increasingly show the messy aftermath of survival. Traditionally, the credits would roll as the final girl emerged victorious. Jamie Lee Curtis, who portrayed Laurie Strode, put it eloquently: "we never make movies about what happens after the violence" (Nyren, E., & Nyren, E. 2018). Contemporary films have panned the lens to how these experiences effect women in the long-term, both personally and generationally, a clear consequence of the ongoing cultural fight for justice.

In Halloween (2018), we return to Laurie Strode, who is now living in fear. A far cry from the girl we first met in 1978, she is single-mindedly obsessed with getting revenge on Myers. The film's screenwriter, David Gordon Green acknowledged the influence of the #MeToo movement, a global campaign to raise awareness of the effects of sexual violence, on the film's production.

Similarly, slashers have continued to move with the times by paving the way for female rage in cinema. Final girl Sam Carpenter (Scream, 2022; Scream VI, 2023) defies tradition with her ruthless nature. This is in part due to her grappling with her heritage, as the daughter of a killer. Even Sydney Prescott, who first captured audiences with her teenage innocence and reserve, has evolved into a battle-hardened adult in recent films. Women on screen are finally claiming their right to be angry, complex and at times morally ambiguous.

In many ways, the final girl trope holds two opposing truths. She is both a feminist archetype and a victim of the culture in which she was written. This dialectic is perhaps why she, alongside the iconic slasher villains, has stood the test of time.



She is simultaneously a trope and an embodiment of the wounds inflicted by internalised patriarchy on women. In short, in a culture that too often turns away from the suffering of women, slashers established themselves in popular culture by brazenly confronting violence and sexuality. These beloved films have endured because they have continually evolved, mirroring back our own shifting fears. And so, the next time a slasher hits the big screen, you will find me, popcorn in hand, waiting to see the final girl through to the end.depicted their fears, were young women drawn to slashers? The answer may lie in the predictability of slasher films. The conventions that define the genre are formulaic. The final girl trope, although orbiting the questionable gender roles of the time, exemplifies this: be chaste, be androgynous and you can escape the killer. But predictability is safe. The audience could confront their fears in a controlled way, an idea that is not without precedent in horror literature.

Piece by Nicole Gayler
2026



run_away_u

What is Man without his ability to step out of bound? Our sins are innocent when done with no control, when done with unknown regret. They harm others because of our weakness of understanding and self-control. We are weak, born that way.

The Sinner always leaves the bounds of what's known and allowed. He finds more to this world outside those bounds. But he'll only know himself when he returns to His Lord's commanded ways. The Saint is no better than the Sinner when he's been nothing but righteous his entire life. The sinner is a lost cause that is found by the Lord.

Eva Evergreene

My name is Eva, I'm a Photographer and digital artist based out of Rural Wisconsin. The focus of my art tends to lean one of 2 ways, nostalgic or otherworldly. I live in a part of the midwest where the farmland starts to drift back into the deep forest of the North woods. Everywhere you look you can frame something in a way that speaks to most people. An abandoned barn? Creepy, liminal, a forgotten relic. But to someone else? It feels like home, childhood, memories. My focus bounces back and forth between these emotions depending on what I'm drawing inspiration from at that moment. In this work, I was pulling from current events centered around the horror of existing in a femme body. For some, these images will evoke memories, and for others, maybe a warning.

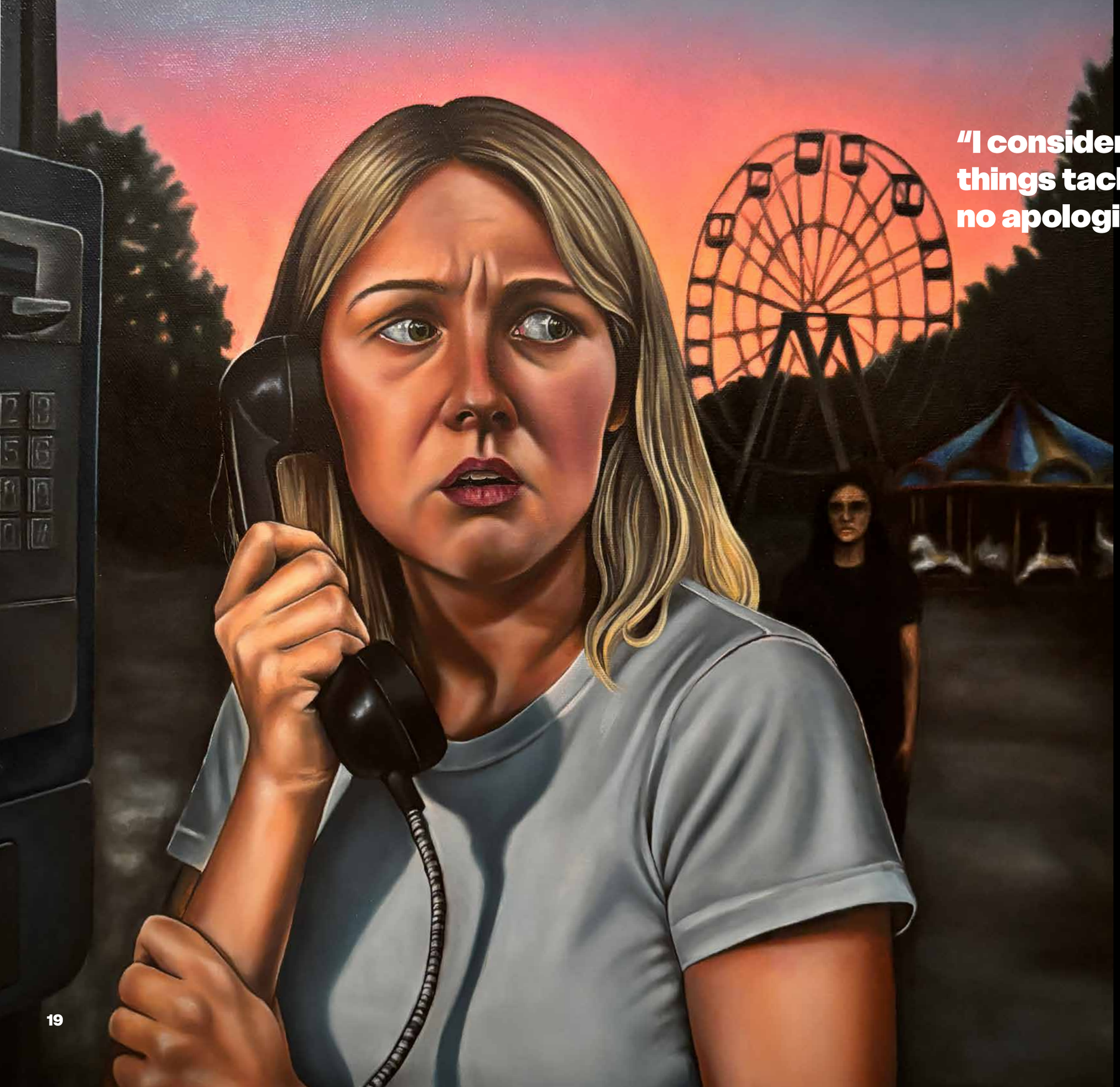
Do you like scary movies?

Yes, I recently watched a folk horror out of the Basque region, such a phenomenal take on how christianity, the patriarchy, and colonization impact free thinking, women, and connection to your folk roots. Gaua was 10/10.

What is the biggest influence of your work?

I pull a lot from my dreams and things that make me feel nostalgic. I come from a very chaotic childhood that caused me to have chronic nightmares well into my early adult years. As I processed the trauma and experiences, my nightmares turned to dreams and I was able to connect with my creativity again. I started taking long walks through town and that's when I discovered how healing it can be to just observe your community. Seeing families out with their kids, retired folk tend to their gardens, dinner bells ringing, there was a connection to my own childhood everywhere I looked and it felt so good to see. On one hand, my images help me reconnect to my childhood. On the other, I process the grief that comes with that.





"I consider myself an expert in all things tacky and cliche and make no apologies for this."

Katie Tara Nicholls

I am a part time artist who transitioned from printmaking to painting about five years ago, embracing the medium as a way of crafting my ownnarratives. My work draws inspiration from film, popular culture, and subject matter often dismissed as lowbrow or tasteless, but what I consider to be important cultural reference points. I consider myself an expert in all things tacky and cliche and make no apologies for this. I attempt to blend personal memories with iconic scenes from film, television and paperback book covers. I hope my paintings create a playful yet evocative dialogue between nostalgia and artifice. Alongside my painting practice I have spent the past twelve years teaching art in schools and colleges across London and more recently, Sussex, sharing my passion for creativity with the next generation of artists.

Do you like scary movies?

LOVE THEM! I'm a huge fan of body melt horror with Basket Case and Street Trash being some of my all time favourites. I love the old Troma films, in particular Class of Nuke Em High 1 and 2. That said I have so much time for stock 80s horrors like Return Of The Living Dead and Night Of The Demons.

I really take a lot of influence from films. I watch a great deal of films (on average about six per week) and have them on while I paint. I also derive inspiration from trashy, horror paperback book covers of the 1980s and 90s.

Aster Munro

Aster Munro (he/they) is a writer and multi-disciplinary artist, specialising in all things horror. In 2018, he relocated from California to London to pursue a degree in screenwriting at Regent's University. During his time there, he made two short films. The first, "Tentacle Head", was co-directed by Munro, who also handled the prosthetics, make-up, and editing. He later wrote and co-directed "Sewn with Scarlet Strings", which he also edited and composed the score for. Both films achieved recognition, being showcased at various festivals around the world. Since graduating, Munro has worked on a range of projects in diverse roles, ranging from prosthetics make-up to the art department, with his free time spent working on photography or painting. Most recently working with Amazon MGM on the third season of "The Lord of the Rings: Rings of Power", as a script supervisor trainee.

Do you like scary movies? And if so which ones?

Yes, scary movies are my world. I love good gore and body horror; my favourite scary movie would probably be The Brood.



Fairy Jewellery

A collection of handmade jewellery crafted from teeth, designed to decorate the Tooth Fairy.

2026, photography.



“What makes me uncomfortable is how easily people look away from the things that shape us...”

Sheridan Hines

Push and Pull speaks to my own addictive cycles, and the ways they continue to exist even after becoming sober. Craving wine at 9:00 a.m. Crying in front of a gas station because I’m convinced I’ll fail as an artist, believing alcohol will make me feel better. Falling back into the lies I’ve created to protect myself.

Addiction doesn’t always end when sobriety begins. Sometimes the cycle changes shape. Sometimes it lives in the thoughts, the fear, the shame, and the constant pull toward what once made everything feel easier.

Do you like Scary movies?

Yes, Terrifier 2 is my favorite, Hellraiser, Evil Dead.

What is the biggest influence in your practice?

Horror film and generational trauma and rape culture in America.

—illness, trauma, grief, and ways the body remembers what it has survived. That discomfort sits at the center of my practice. I create sculptures that ask viewers to confront what they might avoid, creating space for honesty and curiosity.

My work explores the aftermath of experiences that go unseen. I draw from the medical world, wounds, recovery, and expectations placed on women’s bodies. These themes are personal, but my sculptures are not self-portraits. Instead, they act as stand-ins for collective experiences, existing between what we reveal and what we hide. Horror influences my practice, its ability to create tension through atmosphere, silence, and anticipation. I am not interested in gore for spectacle, but in the unsettling moment when something feels recognizable, almost human, yet unfamiliar. I use carved foam, resin, silicone, plaster, fabric, and mixed media to create forms that suggest organs, skin, wounds, or remnants of medical procedures without becoming one thing. Texture—wrinkled surfaces, stretched membranes, and frayed edges—becomes a language of its own.

I use installation to place these objects within environments suspended between aftermath and anticipation. Through lighting, spacing, and silence, I want viewers to feel as though they have entered vulnerability that was never meant to be witnessed. My work is an act of not looking away. It asks viewers to step into discomfort, confront what we hide, and find honesty within the spaces we are taught to fear.

Clown Clinic patient 3 02

Joana Simães

Part of *The Clown Clinic*, a series exploring the sad clown paradox and the uneasy space between laughter and fear. The clown is both entertainer and patient — a figure constructed to make us laugh, yet carrying something unsettling beneath the surface. What begins as a familiar character slowly becomes something harder to look away from.

Joana Simães' painting explores the contradictory nature of being human. She observes a tension between the formal harmony of academic art and the imperfect nature of the human nature. Her expressive style conveys what is ineffable, psychological and constantly shifting. Working with oil paint on rigid wooden surfaces allows Joana to develop a distinctive graphic expressiveness that heightens the emotional tension. She draws inspiration from artists such as Francisco Goya and Michaël Borremans, exploring ideas of existential anxiety, absurdity, and intimacy. Recognising that the fluidity of inner experience cannot be fully captured in a single, fixed image, Joana creates open-ended images that invite viewers to project their own interpretations onto them

Do you likes scary movies?

The Conjuring, Insidious, Verónica, Megan Is Missing, Sweeney Todd, The Texas Chain Saw Massacre, Jeepers Creepers, and I Spit on Your Grave. But I've been particularly obsessed with Terrifier (and The 9th Circle short film). I love horror that can be genuinely disturbing, whether it's supernatural, or not.

Credits

Lily Cuthbertson
Pages 1-6

"Dead, Wrapped in Plastic" (2026) Photography

"Untitled (Horror Film Still) #1 & #2" (2026) Photography

@lilycuthbertson__

Christopher Watiker
Pages 7-8

'The Backroads Ghost' (2026) Photography

@negatives_exposure

Namyan
Pages 13-16

'Reverend' (2025) Photography

Eva Evergreene
Pages 17-18

'Final Girl' (2026) Photography

@evergreene.images
Model: Dee Bryn
@callmedee.bryn

Katie Tara Nicholls
Pages 19-20

'Alice's Haunting' (2026)
48x48cm
Oil on canvas

@katietaraart

Aster Munro
Pages 21-24

'Fairy Jewellery' (2026)
Photography

@astermunr

Sheridan Hines
Pages 25-26

'Push and Pull' (2026)
Silicone, Resin, Wood, Plastics
2"x2"x8"

@sheridanhines

Joana Simães
Pages 25-26

'Clown Clinic patient 3 02' (2022)
Oils on Wood
61x61cm

@j.a.c.simaes

Nicole Gayler
Writer
Pages 9-12
@nicolelillyart

Nicole is an English writer and artist. She is the founder of Awestruck Press, a literary and visual arts organisations that seeks to inspire social and environmental action. Her work has been published by Poetry X Hunger, Sunday Mornings at the River, The Bookends Review, and Prospectus, among others. A love of horror has been the thread that has run throughout her entire life, and her ability to yap about it is endless.

Do you like scary movies? And if so which ones? - "I don't really watch them. They're all the same. Some stupid killer stalking some big-breasted girl who's always running up the stairs instead of out the front door." Jokes aside, all of them. If I had to choose, I would say found footage is the closest to my heart.

Daisy-Drew Smith
Director &
Chief Editor
Pages Editors Note & Credits.

Halloween (2024) Photography

Boat House (2024) Photography

@daisydrew_art

Stills.

Pages 9-10 Friday the 13th(1980).
Pages 11-12 Scream (1996) & Halloween (1978).
Page 25 The Texas Chain Saw Massacre (1974).
Page 28 A Nightmare on Elm Street 3: Dream Warriors(1987).

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