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# BULLETIN

*Transcendence*





## COLOPHON

Bulletin is a quarterly informal magazine created by study association Itiwana of Cultural Anthropology and Development Sociology in Leiden.

## EDITORS

Despina van Binnebeke, Mai-lu Ensink, Annika Krüger, Thirza van 't Rood and Anouk Zilverentant.

## LAY-OUT EDITORS

Annika Krüger

## THIS EDITION'S CONTRIBUTERS

Anne van Egmond, Annika Krüger, Anouk Zilverentant, Daniela Tinca, Despina van Binnebeke, Kavi Kanani, Mai-lu Ensink, Max Kortekaas, PhotoCom, Rémi ten Hoorn, Roxanne Hendrix, Floor Niemans, Thirza van 't Rood and Tino Rodao.

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## EDITOR-ADRESS

Study Association Itiwana  
T.a.v. Bulletin-editors  
Wassenaarseweg 52  
(Kamer SB07)  
2333AK Leiden

# Trancendence

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# Editorial

By Thirza van 't Rood

Dear reader,

When you think of otherworldly experiences, what comes to mind? Are you comfortable with the thought of existing beyond the world we experience day-to-day, or does it scare you? You have likely already had such an experience in your lifetime. What was it like?

Transcendence, as we interpreted it in this edition of the Bulletin, can mean more than spirituality and the otherworld. We saw it as transcending the borders of your mind - some may feel that this is spiritual, others may prefer the terms 'magical', 'religious' or 'different'. Some seek this transcendence and others avoid it like the plague. I have to say that in this edition, you will mostly find contributions by the former type of people. I think that being open to different experiences is a great quality that we as budding anthropologists are learning. This edition might contribute to this.

Reading this Bulletin, you will find that we have not only written about transcendence. The DIY, for example, is about making a protest sign. Incorporating a sub-theme of protest might seem far-fetched when the main theme is transcendence, and in some ways it might be. Fact is, we just really wanted to also discuss protests due to their relevance in these times (free Palestine, anyone?). All the forms and themes of activism that we find ourselves involved in and confronted with broadening our minds. Joining a protest might even feel spiritual in itself. We hope that these rubrics too will speak to your imagination.

Lastly, I would like to bring to your attention the beautiful QR code art piece you can find below. Scanning this code will bring you to a very short questionnaire about the Bulletin, and you would help us a lot by filling it in :). See, now we're transcending beyond this paper or digital booklet! Life is wild. Enjoy this edition!

Thirza, chair of the Bulletin Committee 2020-2021



ACTIVITY REPORT

# VOLLEYBALL

By Roxanne Hendrix

It was a wednesday afternoon when we would be having our first in-person Itiwana activity of the year. I remember that it was quite gloomy weather the whole morning and we were doubting whether or not we should cancel the tournament. But playing volleyball in the rain would also be a lot of fun, so we decided to just go ahead with it. And I am glad we did, because just as we were about to play beach volleyball on the fields just outside USC, it seemed like the weather gods were on our side and rays of sunshine danced on the playing fields. The first tournament began, and as Iti's, all of the teams quickly became quite competitive (of course in a friendly manner). People were running, diving to the ground and some were just waving their arms around, all to make sure the ball would not touch the sand. And despite lack of experience, every team was quite good at that. What struck me is that Iti's from all years came to the tournament, all excited to see each other again and have a real life actiity. And even though not everybody knew each other that well, it was a very successful afternoon! (Spoiler: there might be a re-match coming, so be prepared....)



ACTIVITY REPORT

# OPEN MIC NIGHT

By Floor Niemans

On this amazing Wednesday evening, the activities committee hosted the annual open mic night. This year this took place online, so at 8 in the evening we all opened our laptops and joined the zoom meeting. We warmed up with a poem game in which the group was divided into breakout rooms in which each participant came up with a sentence to form a collaborative poem. The other game we played was 'guess the song'; we all got very competitive :). The rest of the night was filled with amazing performances such as a song about Tees the boomer, an awesome song by Tino, a karaoke performance by K4, a video clip by the board, and many more spontaneous jams. We will see you again in the coming year, which will hopefully be on a real stage again ;).



ACTIVITY REPORT

# ITI-TRIP

By Thirza van 't Rood

In May, a group of Iti's went on the most creative Ititrip ever! We visited Rotterdam, Amsterdam, The Hague and Leiden, discovering parts of the cities that even those who lived there didn't know about. Murders were solved, blisters were walked, games were played and friends were made. The cherry on top was perhaps the amazing online tours we got: we learned about street art in Istanbul, queer history in Argentina, and took a road trip through the USA. We painted dot art and danced to kpop, took shots of maple syrup and took soooo many selfies for the activities. It sure was a trip to remember, and we're very proud of the travelcom for organizing this!

# WE'RE NOT REALLY STRANGERS

By Tino Rodao

Since before applying to the board, I already had a vision. I wanted to combine itiwana - the fun and amazing gathering point for the great group that is anthro students - and deep teenager talk \*insert cringe emojis and a quote like "I'm a weirdo, have you ever seen me without a beanie?\*. But really, what I care about the most is talking and connecting with what is really important. Talking about normal stuff like golf and bowties - hope you get the reference - is great, but incomparable to sharing what our beautiful hearts want. Sooo I wanted to organize an activity where I could bring together amazing itis and trying to, together, explore ourselves. And, oh boy, my dream came true.

The activity consisted of dividing people into groups of 4 and playing We're Not Really Strangers, a card game with adventurous, reflexive and cozy questions. We all started with the get-to-know-each-other cards, and later got to the ones that open your eyes. The activity lasted for 6 hours and half. Still can't believe it. It is amazing how this shows how much people value and enjoy a comfortable space to share and listen to the marvels of human life. It was a dream come true not only because I really wanted it, but because I knew we all wanted to talk about this, and it was still so impactful to see the giganticness of this desire to share. Hope reading this serves as a reminder for you to think about what you want in your life, and that others share the same longing heart that you, gladly, have.

# CLOTHING SWAP

By Acticom

Better late than never - on May 20th Acticom organised the first in person activity of this academic year! On a sunny Thursday we gathered on the grassfield behind the Faculty of Social Sciences, with a huge pile of clothes and some tasty homemade baked goods. Not only did we find a new home for our preloved clothes - we also raised 50 euros for charity! But maybe the best part of the day was just to finally see each other again and be able to talk in real life.



# LETTER TO MY YOUNGER SELF

*Dearest Little One,*

You, sitting in the corner, swept away in your imagination. You, living life through the words of a distant person in a distant place. Look up. Look at where you are. Take in the world around you. Look at the people surrounding you, look at the person you have become.

Remember when you built your tiny villages on the butterfly carpet in your room? Remember the umbrella fort you used to make on the grass? Remember the times you moved around and the magic you found in every corner of every new house? The nooks and canines, the closets you preferred to your bed? Remember the friendships you believed would never end? That time you had pudding for breakfast

Do you remember the times you trusted the wrong person? The times you loved too fast and healed equally slow, picking up the pieces? Remember the sadness that sometimes seemed to swallow you, embraced you, cradled you?

Remember? Remember and do not forget. It is the magic of being a child, the adventure growing up, that you should treasure. The curiosity that you felt, looking at the world. Heartbreak is part of this adventure, my dear. I'm afraid it is inescapable. Don't shy away from it, embrace it and learn from it. Trust yourself not to make the same mistakes the same way twice.

Place your bookmark and close your book. Put it down and save it for later. Be there, come out of your corner. Stop being afraid, to be yourself. We are all a little strange, even if we sometimes pretend otherwise. Treasure those who choose to share your time, savour each other's presence because before you know it, they might be gone for good. Make no effort for those who choose to ignore you; there are better people for you to love and care for.

Go outside, feel the sun baking on your skin. Go outside, even if the rain falls in fat drops on your face and the wind sweeps your hair in all directions. Don't try to tame it; it was meant to be wild. Pick a flower for your mother and a strand of sun-dried grass for your father. Let it remind them of their youth. Pick a strand for yourself too. Press it between the pages of one of your countless books for when you finally get out of this town, save it for when the nostalgia knocks on your door, ready for a cup of tea. Take in the colours of the flowers of the field, the smell of the earth and the minor stains the leaves imprint on the pages of your book.

NEVER stop dreaming. People will question you, the things you stand for and the person you will become. Do not change your dreams simply because others disagree or do not believe it is in your capabilities to make your dreams real. Believe me, they will, even the ones closest to you. One day you will grow a little more, and you will think that you know all there is to know, but as long as you have a brain, you are never too old to learn. You just have to be open to it, open to the challenge.

Lastly, my dearest, don't take yourself so seriously. You are but a child, don't be so afraid to enjoy life as such. Life is too short, too precious for you to take it all so seriously. Enjoy it, every moment as long as you can.

*With all my love,*

# A CALL WITH... THE IDEECAFÉ

By Thirza van 't Rood

Transcendence is about transcending the borders of your mind. I looked for an organization in Leiden that is very good at this and found the Ideecafé (idea cafe). With the Green Ideecafé, foundation Ideewinkel (idea shop) offers people with questions and initiatives (regarding sustainability and a green Leiden/area) a stage to talk and meet. It is an inspiring platform for sustainable development on a local scale. I interviewed Ckees van Oijen, projectleader of the Ideecafé, about their meetings and aims.



## What do you do as Ideecafé?

Ckees van Oijen: 'The workgroup Green Ideecafé (of 5 members) organizes meetings to inform, inspire, connect and activate people to start initiatives together and to realize their dreams. Some meetings have presentations or pitches of ideas as an introduction, sometimes we have film evenings with discussions. Together with the people who have taken a certain green initiative we look for a suitable content and form to find allies and interested people to realize the ideas, dreams or plans. In the past we have organized evenings covering sustainable subjects such as the energy transition, climate adaptation and biodiversity in Leiden, circular economy and entrepreneurship, and sustainable mobility. We also discussed the Leidse Voedselvisie (food systems in Leiden), neighborhood kitchen gardens, healthy soil, green roofs, philosophy, and the Plastic Spotter.'

## Do you also have other projects besides the Ideecafé?

'The Ideecafé is not the only project of the Ideewinkel. Other projects are Biodiversity garden 'Vrij Groen', 'Filosofie van de Duurzaamheid' (Philosophy of Sustainability), 'Voedselbos Okkerheide' (Food Forest) and 'Ontdek Natuur in jouw Buurt' (Discover Nature in your Neighbourhood). We also work closely together with GaGoed Wijkambassadeurs Energie (Neighbourhood Ambassadors Energy), and more recent initiatives like Leiden4GlobalGoals and the Leiden Donut Coalition.

This Donut Coalition strives for a Leiden region that gives everyone a fair and social basis, within safe ecological borders. The ambition is to create an economy that takes the social and ecological sustainability into account on a local and global scale. This means you have to think big, act yourself and also have to keep long-term impacts in mind.' [Seventh Generation Principle]

### **Why would anyone join the Ideecafé meetings?**

'The meetings offer participants information about actual developments in Leiden, inspiration to get to work with an initiative, a large network to learn from and work together with, and encouragement to strive for sustainable ambitions. We have a network of more than 1000 interested people who get a newsletter every month (10x per year). Everyone is welcome. We try to work together with different organizations and people to discuss various viewpoints of an issue. For example, in Autumn 2019 we brought together people from Extinction Rebellion, Klimaatgesprekken (climate conversations), and the Geluksroute (Fortune route). They had different perspectives on and solutions to the climate crisis, and were, through the Ideecafé, able to come together. Of course, we supported the Climate Alarm of this year too.

### **What kind of effect does the Ideecafé have?**

'Sometimes someone just wants to pitch an idea and discuss it. Other times, someone already has a plan and is looking for support. One example initiative that came out of an Ideecafé session is the Groentepark Bontekoe: a vegetable garden meant for the food bank. Recently, the municipality pitched their plans at the Ideecafé for the new trees regulation of Leiden, and participants were invited to share their views on this plan. The discussion powered by the Leiden Donut Coalition resulted in an ongoing collaboration between local stakeholders.'

### **What would you say to anyone thinking of joining Ideecafé meetings?**

'You're welcome to join!'

### **Is there something you would like to recommend to our readers?**

'The Seventh Generations Principle (Haudenosaunee) is something that can inspire the Ideecafé meetings as well as any discussion about sustainability. It proposes to look seven generations into the future when making certain decisions (in this case for example spatial planning and/or energy use). This is of course very hard, we don't know what will happen in seven generations, but the idea helps to make better decisions.'

### **Other information and fun facts**

Meetings of the Ideecafé are usually held on the third Monday evening each month in Scheltema, Leiden. You don't need to sign up to participate. During corona times, you might need to sign up due to a limited number of seats (or to receive the link to the online event). You can sign up for the newsletter through the website (scroll down all the way). The Ideecafé is intersectional - it brings together organizations and people from various backgrounds and with various opinions.

### **Links and suggestions:**

[Ideewinkel.nl](http://Ideewinkel.nl)

[Gagoed.nl](http://Gagoed.nl)

[Leiden4globalgoals.nl](http://Leiden4globalgoals.nl)

[Sites.google.com/view/donutleiden/](https://sites.google.com/view/donutleiden/)

[Stadslableiden.nl](http://Stadslableiden.nl)

[Leidsegesperkken.nl](http://Leidsegesperkken.nl)

[Philosophy of the seven generations](#)

# Pinboard

What is your most memorable moment of a protest you took part in?

*Tbilisi, when we were on study trip!*

*At the NietMijn Schuld (not my debt) protest at the Malieveld on the 3rd of June, I got to boo the VVD in real life for their choice to make students loan money for uni. It felt very good, would recommend.*

*Spraying 500 colourful dots on the Lammermarkt!*

*When I was asked to manually count all the people that came and everyone had fun seeing me draw stripes on my arm with a pen while counting them.*

I had a dream the other day  
A dream in which I passed away

I drowned in a ocean  
Lifeless, without motion

I drowned in pain  
In darkness and in vain

There I just layed in the big sea  
The waves took my tears, nothing to see

I know I wrote 'passed away'  
But only my body did stay

My soul and mind transcended  
Utterly unintended

I turned into something I always adored  
And maybe this was always stored

I turned in to the light  
So bright  
So seeable in the night  
So redeeming my own fright  
So never wrong and always right

I turned in the light in all it's forms  
From the sun  
To the fire out of a shooting gun  
From the match, the lantern or the candle  
To the magma, so hot , for none to handle  
From the thunder that shook the seismograph  
To flash when you take a photograph  
From the firefly in your backyard  
To the fenix rising from it's shard

I am and the light  
And the darkness clears  
I am the light  
And evil disappears  
I am the light  
And it came from within  
I am the light  
Redeeming my sin  
I am the light  
Because I transcended

I...  
I am...  
I am Max...  
And my dream has just ended

# LETTER EXCHANGE

By Anne van Egmond and Thirza van 't Rood

*Hey you!*

So, protesting huh. Quite a big subject in our contemporary little world, where Black Lives Matter protests sprung up everywhere after George Floyd's murder, people are protesting every week against the Covid measures and climate marches are part of the everyday visuals (at least they used to be).

When I think about protesting, I think about the sphere it brings along. The people fighting side by side to make the world a little better or at least create awareness and hopefully inspire action in those who can actually make a change. I have only been to two actual protests in my life, the Climate March in The Hague and the Black Lives Matter protest in Leiden. I said actual protests because I think I was also at a protest during the Georgia and Armenia study trip way back in 2018, but we didn't really know what was going on and just enjoyed the live DJ at the central square in Tbilisi. Anyways, the two protests I went to knowingly both gave me this feeling of communal power, of strength through numbers. The protests educated me, renewed my awareness of the problems we were fighting for, and sadly also showed me how little can change. A lot more protesting needs to be done and a lot more high-ups need to feel the pressure we do, to actually make the necessary changes.

And then there is campaigning, the less massive and more organizing sides of protesting. Since this academic year, I have actually joined an Amnesty campaign that targets the current rape law in the Netherlands. The campaign is called #Let's Talk About YES! and is working to change Dutch law from rape as something that needs to include violence to one that is based on consent, on a YES! from both parties involved. This campaign is really important to me since statistics have shown that 1 in 5 women in the Netherlands has been penetrated against their will. That is 20%! I could go on about how this cause is important, but that exceeds the space I have here so I will stick to the campaigning side of things. With a small group of fellow students, I helped in the national 'waslijnen actie' where we hung up white clothes to be customized with passerby's experiences with rape, consent, and wishes concerning the law change. Some really powerful stories came out and the action was a huge success, even leading to reconsideration of the proposed changes in the law! This kind of smaller protesting feels even more fruitful to me because I was actually part of creating the change and real progress has been booked in what we were protesting for.

But enough about me! What have your experiences been with protests or campaigning? Have you felt the same power in community or were you more a part of the silent organizing?

*Anne*

*Hi fellow protester!*

I know that there are a lot of issues and matters in this world that are unfair. I've heard many times that that's just what life is like, but I think you and I have a different opinion - it shouldn't have to be that way. I don't know what you are focusing on (feminism? Sustainability? BLM?) but in my experience, they all come down to the same thing: wanting fair and humane treatment by the rest of society.

I have always had a strong drive for this fair-ness, but it only really came to life when I moved to Leiden and joined the environmental movement of The Netherlands. I met people who had been passionately striking since they were 15 and people who only joined because their friends did. The first action I co-organized was a 'human library' - passersby could have a short talk with experts on ecology and activism and learn from this. It was a relative success, and just at that moment, while handing out flyers and seeing strangers connect, I realized that 'this' was way bigger than me. I felt so tiny in such a big world of wrongness, while at the same time feeling so powerful that I was able to make at least a small difference. A few days later we co-organized the climate march in The Hague, and a few months, and lots of meetings later, we organized a climate march in Leiden. It was the same story all over again every time: feeling so small yet big simultaneously.

I wonder if you feel the same about your journey? Have you ever felt like giving up, because the world doesn't seem to listen enough? Have you also had big dreams of achieving a free and safe world in our lifetime? Have you also cried at the news because these dreams are slowly crushed every moment of the day? And have you also regained your hope and drive almost every morning?

I just want to say that I really admire you and your aims and dreams. Activism and campaigning can be draining and hard, but it also brings you the best people you will find on this globe and a very fulfilling life. I have learned that it is always worth it, but most of all to take care of yourself first. The most powerful way of protest is your own existence as you live, and sometimes that is enough. Take care, and see you at the next protest!

*Thirza*



# QUICK AND EASY BREAD

By Rémi ten Hoorn

Baking bread is often something that sounds very difficult and time-consuming. The dough must rise at least two times and it feels like you are kneading for hours... But I have good news for you: this bread is done within 40 minutes (this includes kneading, rising and baking) and it is incredibly easy to make! Besides, you only need 5 ingredients, and you probably already have all of them in your house. When I feel like having fresh bread in the morning, this is my to-go recipe, and today I will share it with you! I found it on a website somewhere, which I cannot find anymore, but luckily, I wrote down how to prepare it. Okay, let's start!

## Ingredients:

- 360 ml / 1½ cups warm water
- 15 ml / 1 tablespoon honey
- 8 ml / 1½ teaspoon salt
- 15 g / 1 tablespoon yeast
- 440 - 560 gram / 3½ - 4½ cups flour (can be whole grain, just plain, all-purpose flour, etc.)

## How to prepare it?

1. Mix water, honey and salt in a glass or measuring cup. Stir well and let sit for 5 - 10 minutes, until you see some bubbling foam on the top.
2. While your water-mix sits, already add 560 grams/4½ cups of flour to a large bowl.
3. Put the water-mix in another bowl and start adding the flour. Keep kneading until the dough is no longer sticker. You want to make sure that the dough is sticking to itself and not to your fingers, so keep adding flour until this happens. You might not need all the flour.
4. Form the dough into a shape you like and already put it on a baking tray (covered with parchment paper). Cover it with a towel and let rise for 20 minutes. Most of the times, I try to place it in a warm spot: can be a radiator or simply the warmest spot in your house. This will activate the yeast and makes your bread even better!
5. While your dough is rising, preheat the oven to 200 degrees Celsius.
6. After 20 minutes you can remove the towel and cut slits on top of the tough.
7. Put the bread in the oven and bake for 16-20 minutes. Always make sure you check after 10 minutes, to see how your bread is doing. When you think it's done, turn the bread and knock on its bottom. When you hear a hollow sound, your bread is probably ready. If you do not hear this, then you can put it in the oven a few minutes longer!

I hope you enjoyed this recipe and bon appetit!

Rémi

RECIPE

# CHEEZY PESTO ROLLS

By Despina van Binnebeke



**Ingredients:**

- 250 grams of Cheese
- Pizza dough (self-made or store-bought)
- 1 pot of pesto, it doesn't matter if it is red or green.
- Cherry tomatoes
- Basil leaves (optional)

**Kitchen appliances:**

- Oven
- Baking tray
- Knife

1. Preheat your oven to 180 degrees celsius.
2. Roll out your pizza dough so it becomes a nice rectangle of about 40x30 cm or smaller depending on the size of your baking tray.
3. Spread the pesto evenly on the dough.
4. Cut your cherry tomatoes into 4 pieces and scatter them on top of the pesto.
5. Apply cheese on top of pesto but make sure you save some for on top.
6. Roll the dough into a sausage-like roll.
7. Take a knife and cut the dough into 3-4cm thick rolls.
8. Put the now smaller rolls on a baking sheet with the cut sides facing up. the rolls might fall apart a bit when you do this but that is fine and adds a little personality :).
9. Put the rest of the cheese on top of the rolls.
10. Bake your rolls for 35-40 minutes until they are golden brown.
11. Take the rolls out of the oven and enjoy.



# HOSPITEER QUESTION

Have you ever encountered something that made you feel out of this world?

On a hot Sunday in India, the sun was setting with the chirps of the birds singing the day away... we rolled out our mats on the rooftop and started.. 108 sun salutations. A yoga sequence that involves 7 different poses, of which you must repeat 108 times. Could my body handle it? It was the ultimate test. We counted, hearing the numbers go up - 20?! Are you sure? I didn't think my body would make it even that far. We kept going though, the only thing we would say is the number of the sequence that we were on, and then we kept flowing. It got to halfway and one of us, Hannah, decided it was enough for her body. Xesca stayed with me for 10 more rounds and left at 60. But my body wasn't tired.. I could keep going, and so I did. When I was doing it myself and counting in my head, my mind slowly emptied. My body knew this pattern without me having to think. I lost all thoughts, judgement and for the only time in my life felt completely and utterly present, completely unstoppable. 108! They screamed! I didn't need to stop. I felt no pain, just connected, alive and on fire, in the best way.

The rest of the night I felt amazing. It was so surreal and my body was in love with what it had just done. I was glowing, inside and out. It was an out of this world experience but it was also a great moment of pride and appreciation for myself.

- Kavi

People. Since I was a kid, I've always loved fiction and superpowers. I always dreamt of being able to transform into other creatures, and incredibly enjoyed going to natural history museums and seeing all the cool animals and dinosaurs. In fact, when I very excitedly pulled my dad to see some dinosaurs in a museum, we walked through the human/tribal people exposition. My dad hilariously remembers how to me it was like going through a dumpster. I just couldn't give less shits about humans. He thought "The thing I know for sure, is that he won't become an anthropologist". Yeah, now that is even funnier. There was something that totally changed my perspective on people. That turned humans into the best creature I could transform into.

That was, again, people. People with an incredible superpower of living intensely. The superpower of having discovered - and being able to show - the value of people. Of life, of the world, of ourselves. And consequently, amazingly enjoying it. Don't worry, as much as I love to talk about this, I won't turn this into a personal spiritual rant. But as a faithful enjoyer of imagining and traveling to other worlds, I wanted to share how impactful it was to start liking my world the most. And partly, thanks to plenty of fictional people and stories that taught me how to better live in my own world. With no need to change it or bring back dinosaurs - not saying no to that tho. I'll end and give an example by referencing one of these, the love song of the Disney movie Tangled; "And at last, I see the light. And it's like the sky is new". It's not as if life for Rapunzel became great because the sky had more suns and flying cars. With our sky being the same as every day, there is still the chance for it to feel new. To feel otherworldly.

- Tino

Do you know that feeling? When you wake up on a summer morning and hear the birds singing? When the sun is peeking through your window and you do not need an alarm to make sure you are on time for work, or because you have loads of literature piled up for uni on your desk? Outside someone is walking their dog, and you hear two neighbours laughing at each other in the early morning sun, their voices being carried through your open window into your room. Do you know that feeling when it is a summer morning and you feel completely calm, because there is absolutely nothing you have to do that day? It is just you, with the birds, the sun, the soft sound of people talking on the street, and the realization that no matter how long you will lay there: it is fine. No rush, no hasty morning breakfast, just the cool bed sheets against your skin and the silence in your house.

For me, these kinds of mornings are one of the most peaceful moments I know. Finding peace in our stressful world can sometimes be difficult, especially when a pandemic is roaming through our lives. But on mornings like this, I can let everything flow away; feeling nothing but calmness.

- Rémi

Something that made me feel out of this world.. hmm, well I do know something that felt as if it was out of this world, for sure. I'm thinking about a particularly breathtaking landscape when you are somewhere above the fussy cities and see all these tiny little houses and cars far away. It makes you feel detached. Now, add to this landscape a golden hour lightning in a summer day, some old ruins of a defense tower, a forest surrounding all these, and there you are, diving into some fairy tale view. To show you what I am talking about, here are some photos.



- Daniela



# LEIDEN'S MAGICAL PLACES

By Thirza van 't Rood

When I think about it, transcendence is really about exploring. It is about experiencing, doing, and then transcending into feelings you maybe didn't expect. I also think about the times that I have felt like I was transcending into a state of calmness and peace. This happens quite often: in fact, I feel like I am on cloud nine every time I visit a magical place. Maybe I feel so at home in Leiden because there are quite a few magical places here. I made a list of these places that are just too peaceful to not walk through when you live here.



The Bult.

This is a park in the southeast of Leiden in the neighborhood Roomburg. While it doesn't seem so complicated when you arrive, you can really get lost in the maze of paths. It's an amazing park to picnic in and to walk in barefoot.

The Roomburgerpark.

A small part of this park is very nice to sit and watch dogs walk past as it is a popular place to walk your dog. Especially in spring when the trees are blooming it is just amazing to sit.



The Schelpenkade.

This street, next to a canal, is somehow prettier than any other street in Leiden. Would also very much recommend walking there at night, when the street lights shine on the water. It's so peaceful and yet in the middle of the city.



## The Burcht.

A classic, but nonetheless the view of the Hooglandse Kerk is just stunning, especially at sunset.

## The 5th Binnenvestgracht.

This is another magical street in the center of Leiden, next to the Hortus. Due to the old houses, the many plants around the side of the street, and some ducks swimming around in the water next to it, this street is just a great short getaway from the busy center.



## Park de Put.

This is the tiny park left of the Morspoort (at the center side) with the black mill. This is also great for a picnic, but especially for an outside takeaway dinner at the water.

## The Hortus.

This is well known, but if you haven't visited yet, do so!! Some visitors miss the cactus and succulent division that is in the same building as the entrance. You can go all the way up and even set foot outside to look out over the rest of the Hortus (see red circle on picture).



# PINK STREET LIGHTS

By Tino Rodao

1st of September of 2019. The day before my bachelor started, and my first Sunday and day in Leiden with my bike! Some of you have had the pleasure of seeing me bike. For those of you who haven't, just know that I am a hilarious example of the international stereotype. Well, imagine how that was the third time I rode a bike in my life. Very chaotic, but incredibly exciting. I was going back home, cycling through Breestraat for the first time and looking at the beautiful lights reflected in the canals. "This is what I'm gonna get to do every day to go home???" I didn't want it to end, even if I had hundreds of night rides ahead of me. So when I was close to my place and I saw a bike path that led in a seemingly cool direction, it was an easy decision.

I started to get surrounded by trees and thousands of leaves that only left space for me to see the downhill road and the stars. Remember how it was one of my first times? Imagine how cool it was to go at - back then - considerable speed through what seemed like a nature-filled area. And then the surprise came. The road leads me to the right and surprises me, transporting me to another realm. There were two streetlights that gave pink light. It went from feeling like a fairy tale forest to being one. It was incredible. And that's it. You turn to the left after the second pink streetlight and you can see the end of the road. The way back to going back home. And sad news, this year some evil evil-doers have turned them into normal streetlights. I'm not crying YOU'RE CRYING. But as I said, that's it. It only needed two pink streetlights to become a magical place. A place where I could call friends, send very long audios, and dance to incredible pokemon soundtracks. And a place that showed me that what was coming to my life was going to be amazing. That even before starting an incredible bachelor, I could still have amazing adventures. And now, that pink streetlights are not needed to continue to be a magical place. To continue to live in a magical way.



# PLAYLIST



# MAKING SENSE OF...TRANCENDENCE

By Annika Krüger

Transcendence is a loaded term. It is a loaded concept and it seems like it is one of those things that the more you read about it...the less you really understand it. To be honest, I have had a hard time writing this piece, simply because so wide, stretching into so many cultures and religions, all with their own interpretations of what transcendence is and how to achieve it. So even though I have read up and done a bit of research on the topic, I am in no shape or form an expert and I am confident that I will leave something out.

It is hard to give a history of something so big and omnipresent in the human experience. From what I can tell, the notion of transcendence has been around for as long as religion. Each religion approaches it differently - through prayer, rituals or meditation. Others achieve transcendence through psychedelics. The experience itself is defined as a state of being that has overcome the limitations of physical existence, being boundless, untied to anything anchoring your thoughts and being to your day to day earthly experience.

Let me describe a day to you I experienced last year. It is one of those experiences that will forever stay with me. It was late June. The weather was warm, almost stifling, but I lived close to the beach so there was always the possibility of a quick escape to the cold waters of the North Sea. I had a cycle around with my closest friend and then we decided to head down to the beach to watch the sunset. I thought nothing of it. It was an ordinary day. As we got closer to the beach though, the sky started changing colours.

It was breathtaking. We cycled along the beach and when we eventually abandoned our bicycles and took off our shoes on the sand, the sky was a mix of the softest colours. Dark grey clouds dotted around the sky, reflecting the peach colour of the hazy sun on them. The sun itself was a stronger orange, radiating a late afternoon heat. It was low tide, and there were pools of water scattered along the shore, reflecting the sky back at itself. It was almost as if at that moment the world was engulfed in the brilliant colours of the sunset. Even the ocean itself was still as if holding her breath in wonder of the beauty above it. For a few moments I was there, but also not. Lost in the wonder of how beautiful everything around me was. A momentary boundlessness, overcome by the beauty of the sunset, limitless.

My soul felt free.

To me, that is the closest experience I have had to what I understand to be transcendence. A brief moment of absolute freedom. Some other experiences also comes to mind: listening to the perfect song while the wind blows through your hair, floating on your back under the ever changing sky, watching the first light of the day break out from behind a hill in the distance or even driving over a bridge looking out. Elizabeth Gilbert writes about her own experience in *Eat Pray Love*, during the time she spent in India at an ashram. I would urge you to check it out too (the book, not the movie).

I hope you can experience something breathtaking and soul-freeing at least once in your life time.

# LETTER TO MY OLDER SELF

*Dearest,*

Look at how you have grown. Your mind, your body, your soul. Look at how you have opened your mind and broadened your perspective on the world you find yourself in. Are you still following your dreams? Are you chasing after them with a wild urgency?, unstoppable? Are you? I hope so.

Have you been to the place you have always dreamed of? Have you seen the peaks of the Andes? Have you swam in the bluest waters of the Caribbean? Have you floated in the dead sea? Have you felt the rains on your face in the tropical forest? Have you burnt your feet on the sands of the deserts? No matter the places you have seen or haven't, I am sure adventure is still lurking around the corner. I am sure that you are still ready as always to welcome adventure when it presents itself to you...

Tell me, dear, have the bad days gotten better? Are you able to deal with them now, better than before? Have you been able to confront your demons, that sometimes haunt your nights? Have you befriended them, invited them in, grown accustomed to them so they no longer trouble you? Do you remember your troubles and your worries, your fears and doubts all those years back? Have they changed? Have they morphed into something else or have they disappeared all together? Have they been replaced by other fears and worries?

I want you to remember your darker days. Remember the way you felt and try to understand why. Go for a walk, hug a tree and just vent! Get it out, all of it - whether to a tree, a fish or a person. Cry, scream, laugh, but don't hold it all inside. It will eat you up. Don't be so hard on yourself. You are just human. You are not perfect, but no one is. Everyone feels a little low sometimes. Don't give up on yourself. Silence the raging voice in your head, feel your heart, your hands, your feet and listen to what your heart whispers to you... you can do this it will be okay you will be okay. You need bad days to fully appreciate the good ones when they come around. They will come around.

Do you remember the time you walked among the trees with an old friend? You were grieving together about those you have loved and lost, reminiscing about the past and speculating about what the future might hold. Do you reflect on conventions like that? Do you reflect on the places you visited, the people you encountered and the memories you share? Do you see how you have changed over time? What you have learnt? Do you keep the lessons you have been taught through the lives of others close too? I hope you do, dear. I hope you do. Through all the reflections and lessons, the adventures and the memories that go along with them. I hope you have uncovered a little more of what makes you, you. Even throughout all your discoveries and adventures, may you hold on to the people that love you, the place you are from, where you are now.

You are doing great my dear, Keep pushing on, you've got this.

*All my love,*

DIY

# MAKING ART WITH A POLITICAL MESSAGE

## DIY STYLE

By Despina van Binnebeke

### What you need to create art:

- Thick cardboard or Plastic Mylar sheets (they cost 5 euros online)
- Stanley knife or Exacto knife
- Pen/pencil/whiteboard marker/permanent marker depending on the nature of your stencil

### What you need to share your art:

- Spraypaint
- Painters tape or gloves (if you don't want to get paint all over your hands)

### The road to making art:

Decide if you want your stencil to be able to fold frequently

- If not: go for cardboard, if you fold it too many times weak spots will appear.
- If you do want your stencil to be somewhat bendy and durable go for plastic.

Come up with a catchy phrase

- Sketch your phrase on your cardboard or on the plastic sheet,
- If you are working with cardboard make sure your letters and figures are not too narrow because the spray paint will not always work on narrow slits.
- If you work with plastic sheets you can put them on your computer screen and trace letters :)

Cut out your letters using your Stanley knife or Exacto knife or let a parent or guardian do it for you if you are clumsy like me.

And there you have it, your very own stencil!

### How to apply your art to the desired surface:

1. Either tape your stencil to your desired surface or hold it in place with your hand.
2. Spray the paint from a distance (i would say 10-15 cm) and use broad, fast strokes to avoid drippage and a waste of paint.

! For your own safety, you can wear a facemask to reduce the amount of paint you inhale but you can also decide to be brave and go without.

!!! Please remember:

This art form is most effective when it is in public spaces, however, in most countries spray painting things in public spaces without authorization from the city council or other authorities is considered an act of vandalism. You can go through the laborious process of trying to get approval but it is unlikely you will get it. Therefore, make sure that when you go out to create this type of art you do it at a time law enforcement is unlikely to see/ find/ arrest you.

REVIEW

# THE PASSION OF JOAN OF ARC

By Despina van Binnebeke

By telling the story of Joan of Arc's trial this film perfectly fits this Bulletin's theme of transcendence. The story of a young girl that becomes God's chosen one and keeps her faith even when others try to make her doubt herself is beautifully portrayed in this silent film. On top of that, the acting of (Actress) who plays Joan really conveys the belief Joan has in a higher power. Those wide eyes that were always focussed on the sky and subsequently heaven made me as a viewer believe that there was really some sort of higher power out there.

Available on: Vimeo and youtube



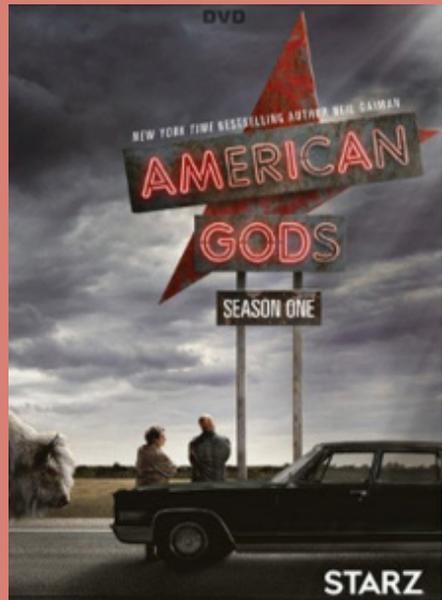
REVIEW

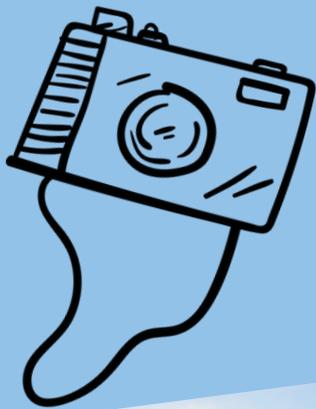
# AMERICAN GODS

By Despina van Binnebeke

This series, based on Neil Gaiman's similarly named book, brought me right back to my (admittedly cringe-worthy) Percy Jackson phase. The story follows Shadow Moon as he meets the mysterious Mr. Wednesday after being released from prison. After becoming Mr. Wednesday's bodyguard Shadow finds himself in a hidden world where magic is real and the Old Gods fear irrelevance in the face of the growing power of the New Gods, which include Technology and Media. This show takes all the fun elements from books like Percy Jackson (Gods, moral debates, fights) and portrays them in a way that is fun for adults to watch.

Available on: Prime video







**Bulletin**  
**Studievereniging Itiwana**  
**Wassenaarseweg 52 (Kamer SB-07)**  
**2333 AK Leiden**  
**Bulletin@itiwana.org**

