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ARTS & CULTURE

SPRING EDITION



**FASHION AS
CULTURAL
EXPRESSION**

**GREEK MYTHOLOGY
AND ITS GREAT
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**WHEN HARRY MET
SALLY**

MOVIE REVIEW

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THE EVOLUTION OF FASHION AS A CULTURAL EXPRESSION

BY LAURA CASANOVA

Fashion evolution, what is it?

The evolution of fashion is the shift in perception of the functionality of clothing. This shift is characterized by a change in which clothes transition from being a practical tool to being used as a vehicle for self-expression, identity, and societal change.

How does fashion reshape and is interlinked with cultural values?

Some believe that fashion is far more than just clothing, that it is a reflection of society, history, and cultural values. From the ancient civilizations to modern-day runways, the evolution of fashion has been a dynamic narrative of societal changes, artistic expressions, and cultural influences.

Clothing can be used to express national identity, social distinction, gender, religion, and political beliefs and is closely intertwined with culture, reflecting social, political, and historical factors. It serves as a visual indicator of cultural differences and societal divisions.



The phases of evolution of fashion and how they are culturally expressed:

Ancient roots

Fashion originated in ancient civilizations such as Egypt, Greece, and Rome, where clothing was not only a mean of protection but also a symbol of social status and cultural identity. Elaborate garments, intricate jewelry, and symbolic accessories were often reserved for the elite, while more plain attire was worn by simpler and therefore poorer people.

Medieval fashion

The Middle Ages saw the emergence of more elaborate garments, with enriched fabrics, ornate embroidery, and intricate tailoring. At this point in time, fashion was closely tied to religion and feudal hierarchy, with sumptuary laws dictating what people could wear based on their social class, enhancing its tie and influence on culture.

Renaissance and baroque elegance

The Renaissance brought about a revival of classical aesthetics, with fashion reflecting a newfound interest in art, literature, and humanism. Luxurious fabrics, voluminous silhouettes and extravagant accessories became the epitome of elegance, as depicted in the portraits of the era's aristocracy.

Industrial revolution and mass production (19th century)

The 19th century marked the dawn of industrialization, leading to the mass production of clothing and the rise of ready-to-wear fashion. With the advent of sewing machines and factories, clothing became more accessible to the masses, sparking debates about class, identity, and consumer culture. The widespread accessibility of fashion represented a notable change in how society perceived clothing, transforming it into a vehicle for personal expression embraced by individuals of diverse backgrounds.

Twentieth century revolutions (20th century)

The 20th century witnessed seismic shifts in fashion, driven by world events, social movements, and technological advancements. From the flapper dresses of the Roaring twenties to the minimalistic styles of the 1990s, each decade had its own sartorial language, reflecting the changing roles of women, the impact of global conflicts, and the rise of youth culture.

Cultural influences and globalization (21st century)

Globalization has had a significant impact on fashion. From African prints to Japanese streetwear, cultural influences are celebrated on international catwalks, challenging traditional notions of beauty and identity. It has allowed the exchange of ideas, materials, and styles between different cultures. The rise of fast fashion has made it easier for people to access clothing styles from around the world, and it has led to the homogenization of fashion trends. However, globalization has also led to the appropriation of cultural styles, which has sparked controversy and debates over cultural ownership.

Sustainability and ethical fashion

Sustainable fashion is a growing movement that seeks to reduce the environmental and social impact of the fashion industry. As awareness grows, there is a growing movement towards sustainable and ethical fashion practices, designers, brands, and consumers are rethinking their approach to clothing, embracing eco-friendly materials, fair labour practices, and circular economies.

Digital revolution and fashion tech

This phase reflects the expected future of fashion, that mirrors the pace of technological development and its revolutionary aspects to the fashion industry. From 3D printers and virtual fashion shows to online shopping and social media influencers. Digital platforms have democratized fashion, allowing designers and consumers to connect across borders in real-time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the evolution of fashion is a testament to the ever-changing nature of culture and society. From ancient roots to digital revolutions, fashion continues to serve as a powerful form of expression, reflecting our collective aspirations, values, and identities. It allows self-expression in its own intrinsic way, attributing personality and by being constantly reinvented and melded considering the culture that is inserted into.



Greek Mythology And Its Great Legacy

BY MARIA MARTA NASCIMENTO

When you think of Greek Mythology, you might picture breathtaking gods and goddesses, wars, family feuds and passionate love stories. Although at first approach it might seem like it is just a collection of ancient epic stories, mythology left a major legacy that not only inspired modern culture but presents important lessons that are still relevant today.

First of all, Greek Myths have been a major cultural influence throughout history. From ancient writers like Sophocles, Euripides and Homer, to modern writers like James Joyce, C.S. Lewis, Madeline Miller and even Mary Shelley, Greek myths have inspired countless works of literature, some of which are considered pillars of the literary world. Greek Mythology's characters and stories have also been influential muses for artists, inspiring famous works such as "Narcissus" by Caravaggio and "The Birth of Venus" by Botticelli. On top of this, film and television have also turned to ancient Greece for inspiration with, for instance, the classic 1981 film "Clash of the Titans", inspired by the story of warrior Perseus.



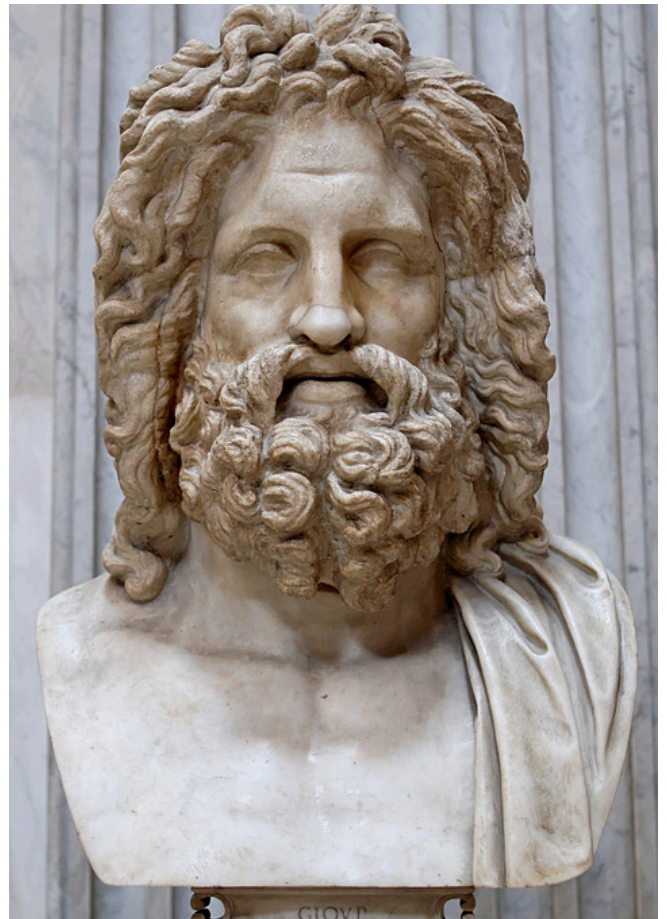
Greek mythology is not just a cultural influence but a foundation of modern culture, as many concepts, themes, and characters of mythology have become its archetypes. For example, an Achilles' heel is a weakness despite overall strength. The expression comes from the story of the Greek warrior Achilles, who, as an infant, was plunged by his mother into a magical river that offered powers of protection. However, as she held him by his heel, it was not touched by the water and when he grew to become one of the greatest Greek warriors, Achilles died from a wound to his heel. Another example is the word "narcissist", which refers to a person who has an excessive admiration for themselves. It comes from the Greek Myth of Narcissus who fell in love with his own reflection in a pool of water and became so entranced by it that he ended up dying of thirst and starvation.

Why did Greek mythology have such a great impact in our culture? Many would argue that it is because it was one of the first attempts at understanding the origins of the world but also at delving into the human psyche and emotions. Indeed, the myths often explore moral dilemmas, human flaws and virtues, providing timeless insights into human nature, societal dynamics and even displaying moral lessons still relevant today.

Diving into Greek mythology can seem scary so here are a few of the most fascinating Greek myths:

How the world and the Gods were created

According to Greek mythology, at the beginning of everything there was Chaos from which emerged Gaia, the mother Earth. She gave birth to our planet as well as several deities including Uranus, who personified heaven and ruled over everything.



Uranus made Gaia his wife (incest was recurring in mythology...) and from their union emerged a new generation of Gods, the Titans. However, Uranus felt threatened by his children and trapped them in Gaia's womb. One of the Titans, Cronus, conspired with his mother and ended up castrating his father Uranus and throwing his testicles into the sea, from which emerged many new deities. Cronus was the new supreme ruler but, like his father, he feared that his children might become more powerful than him and so, every time that his wife gave birth, he would eat the newborn. Cronus' wife managed to hide one of the children: Zeus. The latter freed his brothers and sisters from inside Cronus' stomach and, with their help, defeated his father and became the new and most famous God of Gods.

Prometheus, who stole fire from the Gods

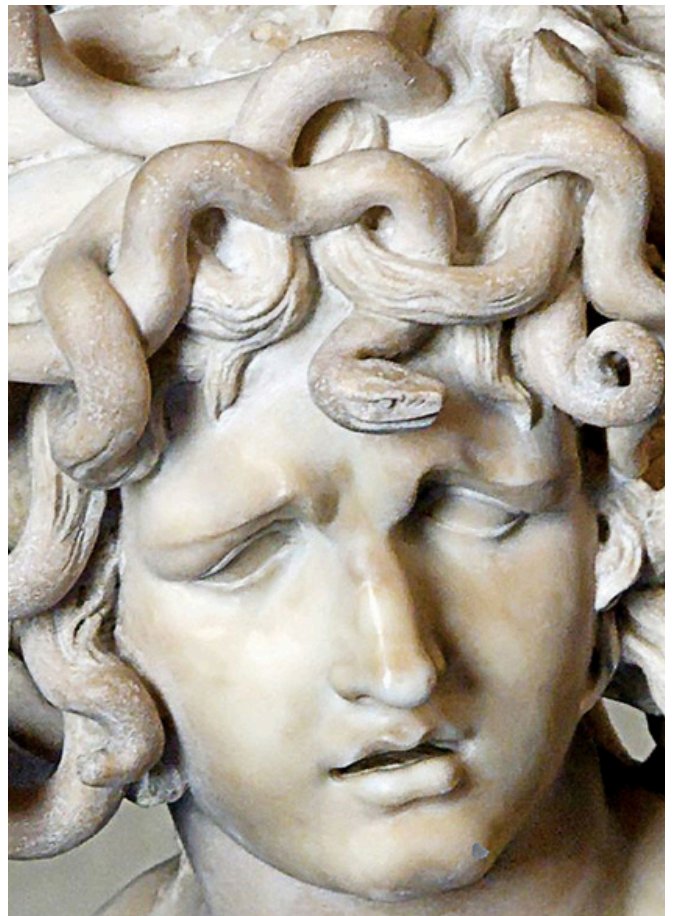
Zeus charged Prometheus and his brother, Epimetheus, with the task of creating and populating Earth. After creating all animals, including humans, the brothers had to distribute abilities and characteristics to allow their creations to survive: Some were given the ability to fly, others were given claws or teeth to hunt, and others fur to keep them warm. However, the brothers used up all of the available abilities before they got to humans and the latter were left unprotected and slaves to the elements. Prometheus decided to introduce fire to the humans. This discovery made them evolve rapidly which worried Zeus, who ultimately removed fire from the hands of men. To save his precious creation, Prometheus stole it back from the Gods to return it to men. For this, he was tortured for all eternity but, thanks to his sacrifice, humans were able to survive. Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* is an allusion to the myth of Prometheus. Indeed, Victor Frankenstein's science gives humans a quality that only belongs to the Gods: immortality.

How the seasons were formed

Persephone was the daughter of Zeus and Demeter, the goddess of nature. Hades, God of the underworld, fell in love with Persephone and decided to kidnap her and make her his wife. After losing her daughter, Demeter neglected her duties, so nature started to wither, and the Earth became cold. Worried that he would lose earth because of his wife's grief, Zeus attempted to get Persephone back from Hades. The two gods ultimately reached a compromise: Persephone would spend half of the year in the underworld with Hades and the other half on Earth with her mother. While her daughter was gone, Demeter made the Earth cold to match her broken heart, but, when she returned to her, the goddess of nature made the earth spring to life again.

The real story of Medusa

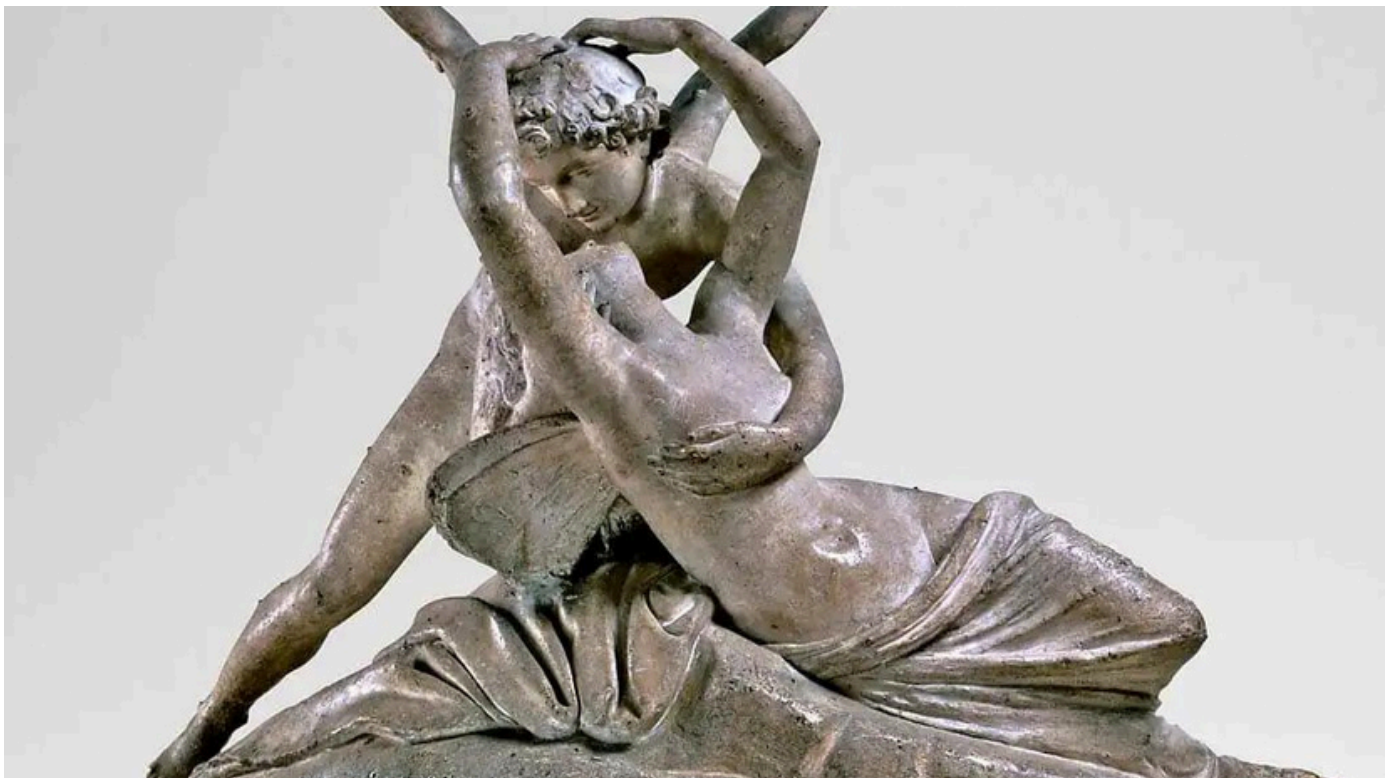
Medusa is often merely described as a monster, a gorgon with snakes for hair who turned anyone she looked at into stone. However, she has an extremely tragic story that is often overlooked. Indeed, she was born as a beautiful and kind-natured maiden, who became a priestess of Athena, the virgin goddess of wisdom and battle. When becoming a priestess, she swore to remain chaste. Medusa would then become the most devoted priestess Athena's temple had seen which, paired with her extreme beauty, would attract attention from many Gods. One day, Poseidon, God of the sea and rival of Athena, tried to seduce Medusa. When she rejected him, Poseidon sexually assaulted her on the steps of Athena's temple. Athena blamed Medusa and accused her of violating the temple's purity. She cursed her with snake hair and stone eyes. Today, survivors of sexual assault tattoo the face of Medusa as symbol of strength, power and female empowerment.



The epic love of Eros and Psyche

Psyche was a beautiful mortal woman. She was so beautiful that Aphrodite became jealous and ordered her son Eros, God of love, to make Psyche fall for a vile and hideous creature. However, after seeing Psyche, Eros fell madly in love with her and failed to perform the task. Meanwhile, the magnificent woman could not find a husband as her beauty intimidated most men. This prompted her father to go seek advice from Apollo, God of truth and prophecy, who, convinced by Eros, told Psyche's father that she was to marry an ugly beast whose face she would not be allowed to see. Psyche slowly fell in love with the supposed beast which made her desperate to see his face. One night, she held a lamp to his head to reveal not a monstrous creature but the beautiful face of Eros. Eros felt betrayed because she had broken the only rule of the marriage and left her. Desperate to get her love back, Psyche went to Aphrodite for help. The latter, still jealous of Psyche's beauty, gave her three impossible tasks to perform in order to get Eros back. Fueled by her love, Psyche survived the tasks, but Aphrodite decided to keep her prisoner. When he learned of this, Eros was touched by his wife's suffering and saved Psyche from his mother. Zeus, who also learned of the mortal's bravery, gave her the gift of immortality so that the two lovers could be together forever. This love story inspired many works of art including C.S. Lewis' *Till We Have Faces* or Disney's *The Beauty and the Beast*.

To conclude, Greek mythology has left a great legacy, seen in many aspects of our culture, as it represents a great analysis of human nature but also one of the first attempts at understanding the origins of the world and humanity. Moreover, Greek myths are fun to learn about: men eating their own children and wives, epic love stories, affairs and violent wars are only some of the subjects tackled by Greek mythology...





“WHEN HARRY MET SALLY”

BY LEONOR PIRES VELOSO

I should preface it by saying that in no way my love and depiction of this movie is meant to be taken as objective or intemporal. Art stands by itself as a subjective experience. It can of course make us feel refreshed in comparison to other art (as this one does to me), but it should stand by itself as a product of emotion. Also, one should watch the movie before reading this as there's a great deal of spoilers ahead, as well as the possibility that you may be influenced by what will be considered by most reasonable people as jibber jabber.

On to the movie then,

There's a great deal of ways in which I can find joy in this movie, Rob Reiner being an unavoidable one. This movie is directed in a way that never feels rushed as each scene shows what it should, how it should and on to the next. He shows that moments don't have to be meant either for just comedy or romance, both coexist without struggle. But what I want to focus on is not the directing side of the movie nor the acting, but the writing. Norah Ephron is the central piece in why this movie is so unique to me. I'll go on to the explaining.

When Harry met Sally could have passed by my screen as just another Romcom. A genre I use to escape reality and where one can find comfort, knowing that sometimes it is as simple as boy meets girl, boy and girl are attractive, “oh I wish I was attractive”, “maybe someday I too will find my Romeo”. It gives hope, everything will fall into place when that one person arrives.

But, what if? What if it's not that simple? What if life doesn't allow for such a pleasant experience, even when that person does arrive? What if people are not meant to be, all the time? That if, is When Harry met Sally.

We are introduced to Harry and Sally as opposites, two individuals who share a ride to New York in order to discuss the expenses of the trip. There's an immediate clash of ideas and personalities, as realness and hopefulness confront each other, leaving no possibility for romance, much less “soulmates”. It is not like something big happens that pulls them apart. They are just different; it never really feels right, both from the character's perspective as well as the audience's.

So how? How could this end up being a love story without forcing into us that usual connection, strong enough to move mountains when there is no passion?

Well, Nora Ephron introduces to their relationship the idea of a possible friendship. Okay, if we can't find in them a love story right from the beginning maybe we can start at a friendship. But that's not as simple as it may seem.

Even if we ignore the fact that Harry doesn't believe that men and women can be friends, the issue becomes impregnable, seeing as there is no reason for a friendship in two people who don't particularly like each other. There are no forcing outside circumstances making them need to. But time changes all.

The film uses time to its advantage as we advance five years in time, encountering the characters a bit different when we see them catching the same flight. Both are in relationships starting to take a more serious turn. There are still a lot of the same issues that have separated the possibility of a friendship. Sally still has the same "leave me alone weirdo" expression directed at Harry and Harry still doesn't believe in the fact that men and women can be friends, even if he is getting married. So, the movie, almost as saying not yet, goes forward five more years, leaving time the space to create a stage where Nora Ephron can now play with her creation.

The characters have now completely evolved, both as a necessity of their own character but also for the purpose of being able to enter a relationship. In this evolution they maintain certain parts of themselves just as we all do. Harry still reads the last part of every book in fear of never knowing how it ends and Sally is still undoubtably high maintenance.



But their views on life changed, so much so that they sometimes become unrecognizable to themselves when mentioned in conversations, like Sally not believing she wouldn't choose Bogart. The point is not for them to understand they've changed, but for us, subtle things that make us understand that in the 10 years that have passed, the characters have started to come together through time and their own experiences. Reaching now the point where it is possible for them to become friends.

This is a pivotal moment, because it starts to answer one of the questions the plot proposes at the beginning through Harry. Can men and women be friends? A less optimistic person may give the argument that the answer is still "no", as they obviously end up being married, but I don't think that's the point. They end up married because in their friendship they both found a possibility for a relationship that otherwise wouldn't be possible, a relationship in which the person you're with is in fact your friend.



Now, in their friendship, Harry can finally be honest, and Sally can find someone that understands her and likes what he understands. Both help each other grow and became a part of their journeys in getting over serious relationships.

As the friendship develops and we see these friends go through a variety of situations, the tension in the underlying feeling of a possible something existing there continues to grow. Harry and Sally find themselves involved in another pivotal moment. They sleep together.

Harry instantly finds himself in the classic post-nut clarity moment. The felling of “Is this it?” and “What now?” doom on him, making him, in a way, reject Sally. Things cannot and won’t go back to the way they were even if they could, Sally wouldn’t want to. The only thing that keeps him from walking away from Sally and desperately trying to keep her a part of his life are exactly the memories that came from the friendship between them. In her, he found a partner on whom he could be honest. This film is just as focused on a serious view of relationships as it is in depicting how funny these relationships can actually be. It helps you see the evolution of the characters just as much as it gives you tips on how to find a good apartment.

All the while following an important moment, the film is interjected by videos of couples unrelated to the plot telling their love stories. It shows other possible beginnings and by doing that, it acknowledges that there is more than one way to come to the decision of buying two adjacent parcels on a graveyard. It even recognizes the famous “I saw her and I just knew”. Norah doesn’t deny these possibilities, she just denies that there is a formula. And why should there be? Why is there the need for some uncontrollable external situation to doom over the relationship, making a battle between the two (or more, you do you) and the conflict? Why can’t the conflict be time or the people subject to it?

And so, we reach the final realization, the “I came here tonight because when you realize you want to spend the rest of your life with somebody, you want the rest of your life to start as soon as possible.” and Harry and Sally’s own little video on how they met ends the masterpiece that Nora and Rob created. I turn off my TV, look for an undisclosed amount of time for a gun or someone on Craigslist and come to terms with the fact that there is only one Harry and Sally. Anymore and this review would also lose its meaning.



AWARENESS RECOMMENDATIONS

Movie

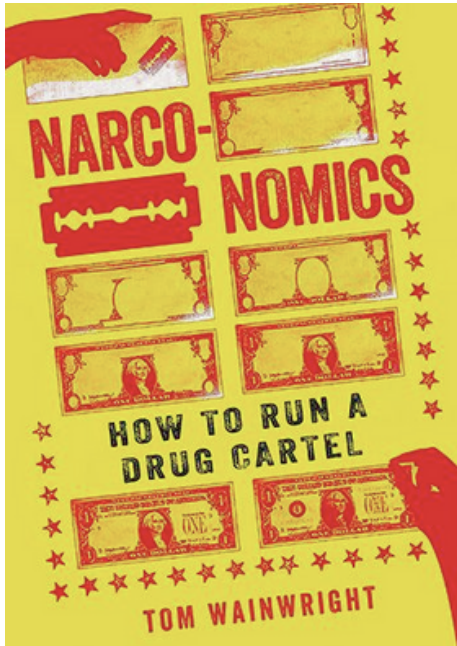
Silence (2016)

Scorsese's rather underrated picture, *Silence*, is a true testament to faith, as it follows two Portuguese priests (Andrew Garfield and Adam Driver) on a quest to Japan, where they try to find their old mentor, who allegedly has committed apostasy. There, while attempting to propagate Christianity, the two are confronted with a country in which the religion is forbidden, and Christians are prosecuted.



On the island where the priests are brought to, resides a group of hidden Christians, practicing their faith covertly to evade government scrutiny. To detect believers, citizens would be forced to step on a *fumie*, a depiction of Christ. Those who trample would live whilst the ones that refuse would face torture and death.

Visually impressive, emotionally dense, and spiritually inquisitive, this film is for Scorsese's fans, people undergoing a spiritual journey or simply those who have 2h30 to spend on a terrific movie.



Book

Tom Wainwright, *Narconomics: How to Run a Drug Cartel*

This amusing title hides behind it one fascinating journalistic piece, with an exhaustive investigation behind it. Tom Wainwright, current tech and media editor of *The Economist* and former Mexican correspondent, embarks on the adventure of immersing himself into one of the world's most lucrative businesses: drugs. He takes on an economic perspective on drug dealing, intertwining with it concepts such as human resources and franchising, that he cares to dissect in order to also provide the reader with a greater sense of economic intuition.

From meeting local producers of the coca plant in secret locations, to coming to a prison to interview a gang leader, this book is filled with both excitement and thoroughness.

Album

Capitão Fausto, *Subida Infinita*

Capitão Fausto's newest album *Subida Infinita*, meaning "Endless Climb", has finally been released earlier this year. The long-awaited project, with 10 original tracks, marks the triumphant return of the Portuguese band who shed some of its famous psychedelic roots and transitioned to an infectious danceability with a bitter-sweet lyrical depth.



The album explores the feelings of longing and accepting the end of an era, searching for the lost positive outlook on people's inevitably changing lives, namely as Francisco Ferreira (Ferrari) leaves the band. As the band paints a picture of wistful reminiscence and acceptance of change, tracks such as "Nada de Mal" and "Cantiga Infinita" weave the intricate narratives of lost connections and enduring love, bolstered by a collaboration with Brazilian artist Tim Bernardes.

"*Subida Infinita*" upholds the band's signature sounds while delving into sonic territories, making it a standout release of 2024.



Podcast

Falsos Lentos (Only available in portuguese)

If you are looking for a refreshing take on football, look no further than the podcast “Falsos Lentos”. In this project, football is discussed in between lively banter among Portuguese comedians Manuel Cardoso, Carlos Coutinho Vilhena, and Diogo Batáguas. The spontaneity of the humorous conversations in each episode captures the essence of casual get-togethers with friends while providing insight into the football headlights of the week. Whether you’re a die-hard fan or just tagging along, “Falsos Lentos” promises a laid-back escape into the world of football every Monday. Don’t miss out on this absorbing blend of sports and comedy!

