

the EXCELSIOR

Patte Loper’s Art and Being A Part of the Resistance



Experimental painter Patte Loper (left) proudly showcases her artwork at the Lower Manhattan Cultural Council Arts Center at Governors Island. PHOTO/ Flickr

BY M.A. RAHMAN

Guest speaker and experimental painter Patte Loper discusses and reminisces her past work/experiences throughout her professional art career, courtesy of the Brooklyn College Art department as a part of its ongoing guest-speaker art series.

Loper, who describes herself as ‘a painter first and occasional sculptor and architect,’ has had an extensive art career spanning 20 years of works that have captivated the interests of museums and exhibitions since the mid-90s.

“It was quite good,” expressed Celeste Wilson candidly, a member of the Graduate Art Students Union (GASU) and co-chair of the Visiting Artist Lecture Series.

“Scheduling can be a bit

difficult since everyone has different classes,” Wilson added, suggesting why few students were in attendance.

Loper, an ever traveling resident of both Brooklyn and Boston, whose work is now curated from a myriad of places such as Juliette Art Museum at the Clay Center for the Arts and Sciences, has primarily been best known for her paintings that incorporate sculptors and videography to enhance their artistic effect.

In the lecture, Loper wastes little time in establishing her early days as a struggling artist fresh out of college, electing to draw a chronology of her life parallel to major political developments at the time, noting the then high hopes for the recently elected then-president Bill Clinton.

The purpose of such parallels, while not immediately clear, had started to make sense later into the discussion. Loper, in addition to being very politically motivated, has been fascinated by the number of social changes the country has undergone particularly in decades pasts.

Like many that choose to be involved in politics, many of Loper’s earliest and more comprehensible works demonstrate her desire to right by those believed to be misjudged as showcased in her postmodern re-paintings of old middle age crude caricatures of persons born with physical abnormalities.

Elaborating on one piece named ‘A Girl born with Fur Because of the Imagination of Her Mother,’ Loper jests at the absurdity of old age thinking “the ra-

tionale at the time was this girl was born the way she was with ‘fur’ all over her because her mother saw a painting of John the Baptist at the moment of conception,” Loper said chuckling.

Finding Postmodern art gradually less exciting than before, Loper abandons it citing it’s ‘narrowness in scope’ and working at the behest of some ‘authority’, opting to create more urban-based paintings.

At this point, it was the mid-2000, Loper denotes, and like many Americans dissatisfied by the current political leadership, Loper found herself likewise never satisfied with paintings.

Being highly conscious if not critical of her own work, she inserts her own critic into her modern urban paintings - a deer, that

at least serves to demonstrate some semblance of lacking appreciation for her work even as it is apart of it.

As the 2009 election came around, it became clear to Loper that like America, she had to change and possibly reinvent herself to enjoyment out of otherwise tedious, monotonous art by exploring into a different world of art altogether: sculptors and architects.

Inspired from everything from environmental upstate water streams to use gravity based painting, to famed disaster artist Lebbeus Woods for construction and planning procedures, to the tips made by vandals in one her exhibitions, Loper found

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theEXCELSIOR

Editor-In-Chief
ZAINAB IQBAL

BUSINESS MANAGER
MILAN MATHEW

COPY EDITORS
SHANA MATHEW
PREEYA NINAN

SECTION EDITORS
FEATURES: M.A. RAHMAN
NEWS: M.A. RAHMAN
OPINIONS: RANTI OLAOSE
ARTS: CARMEN SAFFIOTI
SPORTS: AUSTIN SANTIAGO

LAYOUT EDITOR
SANDY MUI

WEB MANAGER
SANDY MUI

FACULTY ADVISOR
GEORGE RODMAN

117 ROOSEVELT HALL
718.951.5573

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Stop by the Excelsior's office, 117 Roosevelt Hall, every Tuesday during club hours for meetings.

editor@bcexcelsior.com



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CONT'D FROM "PATTE
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new ways to create new and once again exciting art.

"Someone must have seen what I was drawing for my sculptor and said, "Oh somebody's drawing this and I'm gonna draw on their drawing!" Loper erupted in a laughter.

Shifting her attention once again to the political tensions marking the country well into Obama's first term, such as the Occupy Wall Street movement,

Loper admits to her ambivalent attitude towards ongoing political movements saying that while it is tempting to support and incorporate them into her work, she would rather work with lesser controversial, past movements like Civil and LGBTQ rights.

While a 'safe choice' in the eyes of some activists, Loper emphasizes her stance in today's political climate "I am a part of the resistance," she said in a firm tone.

Pointing to an intriguing story of Cuban dissident and artist Tania Bruguera,

who had managed to evade arrest for protesting the Castros in Cuba in 1999 under the pretense of creating an 'artistic performance.'

Which prompted Loper to gain the confidence she needed to create her own means to subtly use of art as means of dissent, by way of creating a fascinating, but vague painting to showcase children in coal dominate West Virginia of alternate forms of energy, a matter their parent would likely not approve of.

Concluding the lecture, Loper, whom in addition

to discussing her past work, had paid a visit to the private BC graduate art studio in Boylan Hall, remarking positively to many of the works she saw, a sign many of the students found encouraging.

"It was wonderful meeting and speaking with Patte, we organize these lectures not only to educate ourselves but also our community, including those that are just interested in art," Bob Szantyr said, President of GASU, expressing confidence in future lectures to be just as intriguing and insightful.

BULLSPIT!

Bullspit! is a weekly satirical column by Brooklyn College comedian Ryan Gleason.

How to Avoid a Bad Thanksgiving

BY RYAN GLEASON

As the holidays approach, we are met with the first of many. Thanksgiving is a wonderful time where families spend time together, discuss what they are thankful for, eat some turkey and hey, sometimes even toss the old pigskin around. But as times change, the disconnect between generations become more and more apparent. As the years go on, the older generations are deemed more and more conservative, and the younger generation is deemed more and more liberal. We all have that uncle who just doesn't under-

stand or respect the times.

Here are a few tips, so that you don't stumble upon a bad Thanksgiving experience.

1: Don't bring up your new vegan diet.

Being vegan is wonderful. Not only does it promote a healthy living style but it also promotes animal and environmental protection. But, your grandma just spent six hours making a perfectly roasted turkey and you wouldn't want to break her old dusty heart, would you? Just fill up on veggies and secretly eat some hidden tofu you hid in your back pocket.

2: Don't show up with col-

ored hair/wacky hairstyles.

Self-expression is valued in our society today, but only dirty hippies and drug addicts and rock and roll fiends messed with their locks during the 60's, 70's, 80's and 90's. Your mom and dad spent years paying for your haircuts, your shampoo, and heck, she even washed your hair for the first few years of your life. Why make them and their wallets scream? Wear a decently made wig or a very sturdy hat, and enjoy the smells of delicious food and the sweet silence of your family not judging your decisions.

3: Politics are your friend.

You are bound to have a difference in political views with one or more of your family members. This is a cute little trick that can help you. If you find yourself on the brink of an argument, start a different fight. Put some mashed potatoes in your mouth and do your best John Belushi impression and spark a food fight that will make WW2 look like a tickle fight. You can't talk about a border wall with a face covered in gravy.



EVENTS LISTING

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29

Chamber Music for Winds and Brass

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Don Buchwald Theater

Leonard & Claire Tow Center for the Performing Arts

Conservatory of Music students present chamber works for wind and brass instruments.

Recruiter's Tips on How to Land a Job

6:30 PM - 8:00 PM

Second Floor - Student Center

Tips on how to make your resume stand out and how you can shine on your interview.

Information Session: Feirstein Graduate School of Cinema

6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

25 Washington Avenue, Brooklyn, NY 11205

Meet with Academic Program Manager, Matthew Moore, for an information session about the graduate film programs and a tour of the facility.

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 29 &

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

Brooklyn College Opera Theatre

7:30 PM - 10:30 PM

Don Buchwald Theater

Leonard & Claire Tow Center for the Performing Arts

The Opera Theatre presents Ravel's L'enfant et les sortilèges in a semi-staged production with piano accompaniment.

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 30

Student Recital

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Rehearsal Studio, Room 367

Leonard & Claire Tow Center for the Performing Arts

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3 -

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 7

World AIDS Awareness

9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Student Center Lobby

World AIDS awareness HIV/AIDS Quilt display.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3 -

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 20

Food and Toy Drive

10:00 AM - end

0710 James Hall

Health Programs Office annual food and toy drive.

MONDAY, DECEMBER 3

Composers Concert I

7:00 PM - 8:30 PM

Studio 312, Roosevelt Extension

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 4

HIV/AIDS Awareness Tabling

12:00 PM - 1:30 PM

Brooklyn College Cafeteria

How to Apply for Federal Jobs Seminar

12:15 PM - 2:30 PM

411 - Brooklyn College Library

Brooklyn College Big Band

8:00 PM - 9:30 PM

Don Buchwald Theater

Leonard & Claire Tow Center for the Performing Arts

The opinions expressed in the Opinions Section do not necessarily reflect the views of The Excelsior.

How the Erosion of Higher Education Became a Constituent of Capitalism

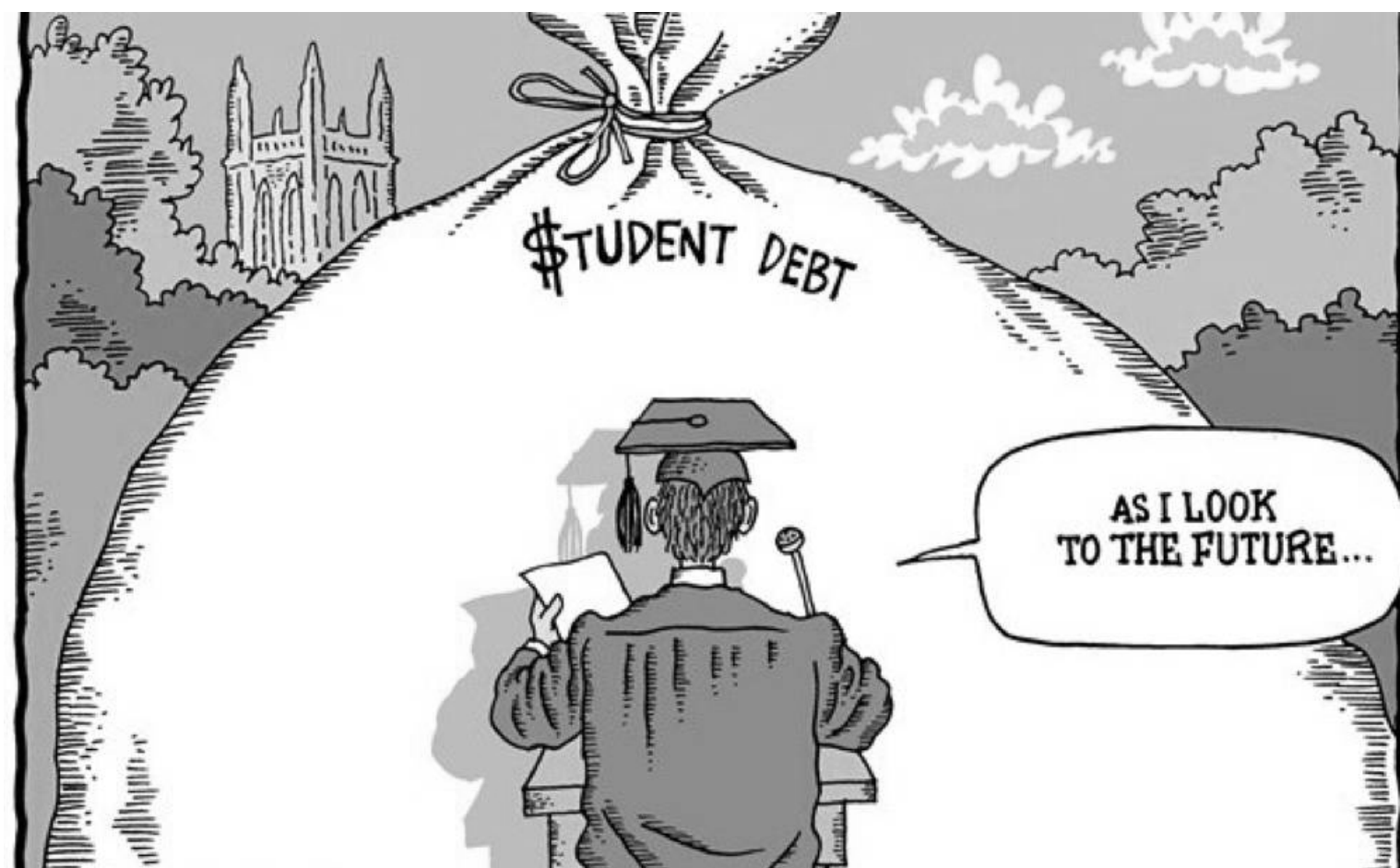
BY EDMUND ZHEN

When you walk into a store to purchase something, do you find yourself gravitating towards quality or quantity? Does it matter that what you're buying is higher in quality for a higher price? Or would you prefer a generic, off-brand version for slightly cheaper? In some cases, you would flock to the former and for others, the latter. This is absolutely fine considering how competition is one of the prime factors for capitalism anyway. But what would your choice be in a scenario where the difference in quality and price proves to be much wider and more consequential?

In 1927, oil magnate John D. Rockefeller suggested an idea that blankets the idea of quality and quantity. This idea was a system of loans devised to offer students the support they needed. He proposed: "For those students who could not meet these higher costs, scholarship and student aid would need to be used with increasing liberality and student loan funds provided on a large scale. For most students, other than those who go in the ministry or teaching, a loan either with or without interest with the first payment date possibly ten years after graduation would meet the situation and not prove an undue burden."

Rockefeller's goal was to give students the monetary support needed to sustain their quality of life and still be able to go to college. All in all, this seems like an altruistic ideal that would really generate momentum in the educational sector. However, Rockefeller's idea proved to be inefficient because it places higher education within the realm of the wealthy members of society.

Incorporating the idea of quality versus quantity actually allows us to see the persisting dilemma America is facing. With a debilitated system in which the cost of education is not on par with the returns expected from the education, Americans are digging themselves



The government's failure to properly invest in the future will only add on to the pile of mistakes America is making. PHOTO/ Bob Englehart

deeper and deeper into an inescapable pit of debt.

In the 90s, the average debt for public graduates was around \$20,000 after adjusting for inflation. In less than 20 years, the cost ballooned by an extra \$10,000 and continues to increase yearly, rendering speculators to say that the country's student loan balance will swell up to \$2 trillion by 2022. In an investigation done by CNBC, it was found that state funding for public colleges fell by \$9 billion between 2008 and 2017, forcing colleges and universities to fill the gap with tuition hikes.

With today's average of \$30,000 in student loans, Americans are finding it difficult to sustain a high quality of living. On top of that, some student loan companies are making life harder for them. One company called Navient has been exposed by the government for allegedly steering "struggling borrowers toward multiple postponements of their loans instead of into income-driven repayment plans, which cap monthly payments at a percentage of the borrower's income." Mississippi Attorney General Jim Hood stated, "Navient's conduct is estimated to have added \$4 billion to the national stu-

dent loan debt. Students are the future of our state, and the presence of companies in Mississippi that knowingly take advantage of students who need the money to continue their education will not be allowed under my watch."

Despite rising prices, the quality of higher education has also eroded. One cause would be the slash of funding that created a trickling effect that has hurt all of society. For one, the languishing payments to CUNY adjuncts and professors cause differences in the materials they teach and a decline in their ability to sustain their families. If educators aren't getting paid the wages they need, how will students flourish when the educators are in trouble themselves? According to researcher Jonathan Rothwell, in 1988, for every 100 full-time students, there was an average of 23 college employees. But by 2012, that number had swelled to 31 employees, with a shift towards the highest paying non-teaching occupations. Now, managers and professionals outnumber faculty, who only comprise a third of the higher education workforce.

It was once common for colleges to have a core curriculum for students.

There would be courses that would build the foundation of a broad and deep education that left students with a well-rounded worldview upon graduation. The issue now is that the curriculum has been eroded so much that it is possible for most students to graduate without ever feeling that they learned anything of value for their lives.

As a college student myself, the education system startles me as I am also appalled with some of the immoral and vacuous decisions our government makes. Living in a world where technology regularly restructures the workforce, it doesn't take a genius to understand that the future will require workers to have a college education. The government's failure to properly invest in the future will only add on to the pile of perilous and irreversible mistakes America is currently making, such as exiting the Paris Agreement.

With our current president's undeviating proclamation of our nation's greatness and power, my rebuttal is, how can our nation be so great if our educational performance ranks #17 in the world? How is America great when it has the most outstanding student debt

in the world? When we do not consider future generations by opting out of the Paris Agreement? When our incarceration rate is the highest in the world? When our healthcare is ranked last in the bottom of the developed world?

There are so many proven facts that would argue against the idea of America being the greatest country in the world. We are most certainly not the best, but we are undeniably more advanced and robust than many. In order to obtain that title, there are myriads of problems we need to bond together to ameliorate. We need to oust people in positions of power that pose as a danger to our democracy and rights. We need to set our eyes far into a future in which we can ensure that new generations will enjoy the same prosperity as us and more. Most importantly, we need to have uncorrupted, unrugged systems that operate for the welfare of the people and not for personal interests. As an American who loves this nation, I believe that change is achievable because we are a nation that has all the right resources and talents to propel it forward.

All we're missing is a leader.

The Brilliant Story of “Dark Days”

BY CARMEN SAFFIOTI

Dark Days is an artistic documentary film by Marc Singer about people living in the underground tunnels of NYC’s transit system. The film encompasses three major themes: destitute, personal tragedy, and human resilience. These major themes are conveyed in numerous ways. One of the most striking ways is through editing and cinematography. The visual storytelling in this documentary is phenomenal. There is little to no verbal narration. The narration we do get is either through the subjects of the film or of visuals depicting their living conditions. I found this refreshing as most documentaries are filled with narration, statistics, and scientific studies. This documentary did not need any of those elements; this documentary achieved what those elements could not— a real story about human beings through their perspective.

The choice to shoot this documentary in black and white is both unique and brilliant as far as visual storytelling goes. Black and white does a great job at visualizing the conditions these people live in, as they mostly live in



“Dark Days” is an intense look into the emotional lives of the individuals who live in the tunnels of NYC. PHOTO/ The Funambulist Magazine

the dark. It also forces viewers to focus on the subjects of the documentary rather than get distracted by the garbage and filth of the tunnels. The black and white works on a symbolic level as well. The people in the tunnels described their life there as the worst time of their lives, however viewers can clearly see their resilience and determination (how they build their houses, how they earn money, etc). The black and white symbolize this contrast in their lives. The subjects of this documentary truly made the best of an awful situation.

There are several shots

throughout the film that stuck out to me as prime examples of visual storytelling. In the beginning of the film, we see a man walking down the steps, and then the camera pans to a thin gate over an opening. In the distance, we hear a train approaching— then it passes through our view. This ten-second take tells us a lot without having to explain the situation. The scene in which Dee, who is one of the people living in the tunnels, explains what happened to her children is also very impactful in terms of storytelling. Upon the first viewing, one can tell that

there is a lot of silence in this scene. At first it may seem unnecessary, but as Dee tells her tragic story it is clear that the silence is there to illuminate the weight of her story.

Personal tragedy is a huge theme throughout this story. Despite their harsh backgrounds, these people did not let themselves fall victim. I enjoyed how Marc Singer allowed the people to tell their stories. Two people had their children die. They both blamed themselves and took responsibility for what happened. But what struck me was, that despite this awful tragedy,

both of these people were able to pick themselves back up. This then turns into another major theme— human resilience. All of the people living in the tunnels have all lived through “dark days,” yet instead of wallowing in self-pity they were (literally) able to build themselves up. One strong example of this is when Greg claims that he has to make money. Greg does not see himself as a victim, which contradicts many stereotypes about homeless people. Overall the people of this documentary prove that human resilience and adaptation exist in even the most extreme situations.

The only problem I had with the documentary is that makers of the documentary do not update us on what happened to these people. While watching the documentary I found myself becoming very attached to the characters and yearned for their success in the outside world. However, that satisfaction is never fulfilled and we are left with our imagination as to what happened. Perhaps this was the filmmaker’s intention - not to squash the viewers hope with an unpleasant reality.

**Do you have a
#MeToo story from
your experiences
at Brooklyn
College to share?
Please email
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you prefer,
you may remain anonymous.**

A Review of “The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina”

BY CARMEN SAFFIOTI

This Halloween came with a pleasant surprise: a reboot of the beloved story of Sabrina the Teenage Witch. This time however, things came with a satanic twist. Sabrina first appeared in a comic book in the early 1970s as a part of the Archie Comics franchise. Since then, this story has been re-told through the forms of a live action and cartoon television shows. Most recently, Sabrina has reappeared in a Riverdale-esque fashion. The show is not as light hearted, heavy on drama, and Salem the cat doesn't talk. With the Riverdale styled reboot, the show comes with some problems that Riverdale also faces—melodrama and some cringe acting. However, if you're willing to buckle down with the campiness of the show this might be worth the Netflix binge.

The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina is probably most enjoyable if you are a fan of other “witch” or pop Satanism media, such as the 1990s movie *The Craft*. This series is much more similar to *American Horror Story's* Coven than its popular live



“The Chilling Adventures of Sabrina” is very different from the beloved sitcom. PHOTO/ Netflix

action predecessor. The most pleasing aspect of series is the aesthetic. It meshes together dark gothic and satanic elements, as well as influences from 80s movies like *The Labyrinth* to get an intergenerational and timeless look. Most of the scenes are dark and moody, with Sabrina

usually lighting up the scene with her blonde bob and 60s chic outfits. The consistency of the visual elements works very well for creating a world that viewers can get lost in.

Sabrina is a perfectly enjoyable character, although this comes with a few problems. She is endlessly witty,

clever, and mature—so much so in fact that it difficult to find a single problem with her. She is what some may describe as a “Mary Sue,” which is a flawless protagonist who beats the seemingly damning odds every time. This is certainly the case for Sabrina— in each episode

she does something that we are told that other older and more experienced and more powerful characters were unable to do—yet somehow Sabrina is able to do them usually within a few minutes. Despite the fact that Sabrina is a half witch, she can outsmart a high priestess, defeat a powerful demon, and break an algorithm puzzle that another warlock couldn't figure out for the past twenty years. Characters like this may seem inspiring at first, but this gets old really fast. Viewers will always know how a situation will end no matter how difficult the situation seems.

A few episodes into viewing this new reboot, you may be reminded of another reboot—*Riverdale*. *The Chilling Adventures* essentially did everything that *Riverdale* did—take a light hearted comic and fill it with moody teen drama. This is not meant to insult *The Chilling Adventures*; the acting is not where near as bad as in *Riverdale* (although there is some questionable line delivery). The similarities are mostly due to the fact that the two shows have the same creator and executive producer. Fans of both shows can look forward to a cross over in the near future, however it won't be a televised event. Instead Sabrina will cross over into *Riverdale* from her hometown Greendale in an upcoming comic release.



PHOTO/ Netflix

The College Football Landscape

BY JOE LEO

With the loss to Ohio State on Saturday, it has now been 20 years since Michigan has beaten Ohio State.

The only game that matters on the schedule for both the Buckeyes and Wolverines is the last game of the year when they play each other. More times than not, that matchup has playoff implications on the line. After the blowout loss, Michigan's head coach John Harbaugh has yet to beat Ohio State in his tenor in Ann Arbor.

Harbaugh will have to answer questions about his job security that are unfortunately what comes with not beating a bitter division rival for four consecutive years. Harbaugh should not get fired. The Michigan program has played its best football since the turn of the millennium. On top of that—Harbaugh has built a culture in the Wolverine locker room that cannot be duplicated in the entire country. Michigan has also recruited well to get top tier players into the program to continue the level of success that comes with being a member of the Big 10.

Yes, he hasn't beaten Ohio State, but Brady Hoke didn't either and Hoke never had as much success at the helm.

The loss also opens up the door in the college football playoff picture. Four teams



Though Coach John Harbaugh of Michigan has not won against Ohio State, he should not be fired.
PHOTO/ [WolverinesWire.com](#)

have a chance for one open slot with Alabama waiting on the other end of it. Ohio State will go to the Big 10 title game against Northwestern to try and bolster their resume and try to get in. Oklahoma will go back to the Big 12 title game at 10-1 as they hope they can get into the playoff for the second consecutive year. Georgia will meet Alabama in the SEC title game and will need a win against the Crimson Tide to get into the picture. And of course, UCF is screaming at the top of their lungs from Orlando as they have gone undefeated for the second straight year.

The team with the most direct path to the playoff as it stands today is UCF.

They have done everything under their control to get a chance to compete for the National Championship. The knock against UCF is that it is an independent school. However, Norte Dame is currently in the playoff as an independent school, so that argument will not be enough of a crutch to leave out UCF for the second consecutive season.

Oklahoma shouldn't be in the conversation because of the conference that they play in. The Big 12 has become a conference where teams play seven on seven for an entire season. The lack of defense in the entire conference deludes the stats put up by the players and the legitimacy of the teams that

come out of the conference. If Oklahoma was the outlier in the conference, then what Kyler Murray is doing for Oklahoma leading them to a 10-1 record would totally change the perception of the team. Oklahoma however, has the 116th ranked defense in the country out of 130 teams. That doesn't scream playoff bound.

Out of all the teams left in the playoff picture, Georgia has the best loss (if there is such a thing) out of all the teams with one loss.

A close loss on the road against a then #3 ranked LSU team will go a long way if they do in fact beat Alabama in Atlanta on Saturday.

If Georgia doesn't finish the deal in the SEC ti-

tle game, their chance for a spot and season are over. It's as simple as that. Even after the win Georgia would need help from the selection committee on their behalf because it would be tough to keep a one loss Alabama team out of the conversation. There is a window for the Bulldogs, but it is small and closing fast.

Ohio State is in the same boat as Georgia, but they have the easiest championship game out of any of the teams in the power five. A meeting in Indianapolis with Northwestern for Ohio State is almost a sure thing for the Buckeyes. If the game goes as outlined, Ohio State will be a one loss team with a conference title. They will also have one of the best wins out of any team in the country beating Michigan. It would be hard for the selection committee to continue to ignore the Big 10 if Ohio State pulls it off.

Like every year since the introduction of the committee, there is a fight going into the final weekend for who should represent the best of the best in college football. With the playoff being as young as it is, this year will set the precedent for what the committee values in their selection process.

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The Way Too Early NBA MVP Ballot

BY JOE LEO

The NBA is a marathon of a season not in the way that baseball is in the day in-day out grind. Basketball is digested so much on social media and in the culture that a month of NBA basketball feels like half a season. With that, here is the WAY too early MVP ballot through one full month in reverse order. And before you say it, I know it's only been a month...

1. Joel Embiid

For the first time in his young career, Embiid is actually outplaying the gigantic social media personality that he has created for himself. The domination that Embiid has shown over the first month is something that is a monstrous concoction of Jordan's killer DNA and Shaq's physical gifts. Embiid is out for blood this year and so far it is working.

For a guy who has missed significant time Embiid has already logged 550+ minutes which leads the league. Embiid also is tied for second in points per game (27.6), tied for third in rebounds (13.7), and is 6th in blocks per game (2.1). What makes his season more impressive than that of Anthony Davis at this point is the combination of his PER and usage rate. Embiid's PER is basically the same as Davis'—which is impressive but to have a usage rate of 31.7 is just in-



Since the midway point of last season, Anthony Davis has played at a level that no NBA player has played at since mid-2000's Tim Duncan. PHOTO/ Associated Press

sane. To have the ball 30% of the time in an offensive with Ben Simmons as the primary ball handler is impressive. Also, having a 31.7 usage rate is historic because that is the same usage rate that Shaq had in his most dominate season, the 1999-00 season. That is some seriously good company. If Embiid keeps up at this rate—he will defiantly be a MVP candidate.

2. Anthony Davis

There is not a player in the NBA that is benefiting from the current state of basketball than Anthony Davis. Since the midway point of last season, Davis has played

at a level that no NBA player has played at since mid-2000's Tim Duncan. This level of basketball makes you stop when you pass a television screen, it makes every game he plays appointment television, and it puts a target on your back. Yes, Davis has had a target on his back since he walked on the campus of the University of Kentucky, but right now Davis has shown the world how perfect he is for 2018 basketball.

Davis has always been a rim protector and a presence in the paint, but he hasn't had the three-point range that he has developed, or the ability

to create in the open court. Through the first month of the season there has not been a better player in the game. Davis is averaging 25 points (10th in the league), 12 rebounds (6th), and 3 blocks (tied for 1st) per game. Not only that he is top 10 in PER, which calculates a players per-minute production when he is on the court. The league average for PER is 15.

Davis has been overlooked as a player because of where he plays for the majority of his career but since last March he has played at a level that basketball would find him if he

was playing on the moon.

3. Giannis Antetokounmpo

The Greek Freak is officially an alien. The things Antetokounmpo can do on the floor are unique and will never be recreated. Just like NBA legend Hakeem Olajuwon, Giannis is a physical freak and can dominate a game like nobody has before. Also, he is only 24-years-old. As incredible as Giannis has been so far this season, there is a possibility he can be even better.

Giannis has a career high shooting percentage at 56% and is top 10 in points per game with 25 (9th), and 12 rebounds per (7th). Gianis is top five in PER with a 26.8 with players like Curry, LeBron, and Durant ahead of him. Like Embiid, Giannis' usage rate is out of this world for how tall and what kind of player he is. For Antetokounmpo is second in usage rate with a height at 6'11" it is mind blowing. And to see a guy with his height and mobility play basketball the way he does. Only Anthony Davis has the ability that Giannis has to be unequivocally the best player in the world. And, being 24 the rest of the league should run and cower in fear. Right now, Giannis is the MVP.

With 90% of the season to go, it seems comical to hand the award out right now, but these are three players who need to be put under a microscope from this point on.



Joel Embiid is a frontrunner for the NBA's MVP award. PHOTO/ Michael Perez

An NBA Rookie Checkup

BY AUSTIN SANTIAGO

We are just over a month into this NBA season and it has already proven to be a season like no other. Between LeBron James bringing “show time” back to the Lakers, questions of chemistry in Golden State, and an action packed Eastern Conference that is up for grabs, NBA fans have a lot to be excited about.

With so many storylines unfolding this season, it is easy to miss out on storylines that are usually the forefront of an NBA season. Perhaps the biggest storyline that has taken a backseat to all of the drama in both conferences is just how incredible this year’s rookie class has been.

Of course, it is far too early to tell if this year’s class will be as influential as the 2003 draft class, but this year’s class has many NBA fans feeling hopeful for the future of the league.

With many of the superstars from the 2003 class getting ready to retire, it is good to know the league is in good hands thanks to rookies like Luka Dončić.

Taken third overall in the 2018 NBA draft by the Atlanta Hawks, Dončić was traded that same night to the Dallas Mavericks, a franchise that has struggled to stay relevant in the



Luka Dončić has served as a shot of adrenaline for the Mavericks. PHOTO/ Getty Images

star-studded western conference the last several years.

Dončić has served as a shot of adrenaline for the Mavericks, averaging 19 points per game, to go along with 7 rebounds and 4 assists, he has become the offensive center for a team that was desperate for an offensive option.

Dončić isn’t the only rookie making waves this NBA season, the player he was traded for on draft night, Trae Young, has also been heating things up down in Atlanta.

When the Atlanta Hawks traded for Young on draft night, they were hoping to

get the sharpshooter that wowed college fans during his stint at Oklahoma, while his shooting thus far has not been as consistent (33% from the field, 15% from three point range), Young has shown some serious flashes of his potential.

Despite his streakiness, Young has shown that his volume production close to the rim can outweigh his inefficiency from deep. Young is shooting 56% at the rim on 15.6 attempts, among 31 players averaging 10 or more drives per game, only Giannis Ante-

tokounmpo, Russell Westbrook, and Caris LeVert are converting at a higher rate.

Standing at only 6’2 and 180 lbs, Young has proven that he can be effective despite his lack of size. The shooting can only improve, so look for Young to become an offensive force in the years to come.

In the case of Dončić and Young, the success is expected.

They were both highly touted coming into the draft, and were both top five picks. The real magic of the NBA draft comes from the players that are pro-

gressing faster than anyone thought they would, players that make a name for themselves without the boost from their draft number.

That is the case of Clippers point guard Shai Gilgeous-Alexander, who continues to be the starting point guard for a Clippers team that is currently the third best team in the Western Conference.

It must be difficult to play point guard for the Clippers, considering the last relevant player to man that position for the team was future hall of famer Chris Paul, but Gilgeous-Alexander has shown that he can hold his own. Possessing incredible ability with his long arms and quick hands, he has become a defensive anchor for the Clippers.

To go along with stellar defense, Gilgeous Alexander is sporting a 46.8% shooting percentage and is knocking down 40% of his pull-up jumpers.

He may not be Chris Paul, but he is making a difference.

The truth is, that is really all anybody can ask of NBA rookies, that they make a difference for the team that drafted them. This season we have been spoiled with incredible rookie play from these three, and others such as Deandre Ayton in Phoenix, or Marvin Bagley in Sacramento.

Instead of crushing these young players with expectations, perhaps it is best we just enjoy the show these rookies are putting on this year, it’s safe to say they are enjoying performing for us.



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