

THE HORIZON

EUROPE

2025

FEBRUARY'S

love letter;

billet doux; παρωσίακι; liebesbrief; litir ghrá; carta d'amor; maitasungutuna; kærestebrev; rakkauskirje; mīlestības vēstule; scrisoare de dragoste; milostný dopis; ástarbréf; ljubovno pismo; armastuskiri; list miłosny; kärleksbrev; meilės laiškas; любовное письмо; ljubavno pismo;

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Horizon Europe

Welcome to the first edition of Horizon Europe! February is for many a month of Love and Passion, with Valentine's Day's saccharine spirit lingering throughout the month and into our minds. Our theme for February then, is Love Letter! The earliest mention of a Love Letter is in Indian mythology, recorded circa 3000 BCE—That's over 5000 years of humans expressing their love—from Imperial China to Medieval England. Our February issue is a humble addition to that list of ongoing self-expression that seems to be engraved in all of humanity's DNA, and a Love Letter itself to all Love Letters sung and sent throughout antiquity.

With February's theme, "Love Letter", we aim to create a space to talk, or write, about what truly matters; an outlet to express admiration and appreciation

As mentioned, this is our first edition, and with all new beginnings come new obstacles to be persevered. This is an experimental first edition, partially meaning that it is shorter than future editions will be, and was released later than other month's issues. In the future all issues will be released on the 1st of the month they are representing, and submissions for the next month will open shortly after—which means that... creative submissions for March are now open! You can scan the codes on the last page to have your own work published in the future!





PHOTO BY LANA GAGULA/SARAJEVO, BOSNIA&HERZEGOVINA

In an era where digital streaming platforms such as Spotify and Apple Music reign supreme enabling users to access millions of songs with just a few clicks on their computer or phone screens, it's nothing short of phenomenal that vinyl records have made a huge comeback after completely being irrelevant in the late 1980s following the invention of cassette tapes and CDs.

SO HOW COME...against the revolutionary convenience of digital formats, non-portable and fragile records that require turntables and careful handling have become so popular even among the younger generations who didn't experience the formats heyday?

Record Store Day

Record Store Day was an initiative a few music and vinyl fans started in 2007. Special edition vinyl records were pressed and distributed exclusively to the record shops participating in the event, meaning they couldn't be bought online. This event was so successful that it led to huge amounts of vinyl record sales in the same year, and it still plays a big role in driving vinyl sales.

Digital Burnout

As mentioned in the beginning, it was surprising to see the increased popularity of vinyl records in the digital age. Well, it was not so out of place, considering that this is one of the factors that drove people to invest in vinyl records again. People who have become overwhelmed by new technologies of everyday life or fallen out of love with technological gadgets have opted for vinyl records to escape these or even to feel a sense of nostalgia.

New Releases

Big artists like Taylor Swift, Lana del Rey, Olivia Rodrigo, and many others, have also been major driving forces behind increased vinyl sales as they have been releasing their new albums on vinyl formats as a way to boost their commercial sales, such as including bonus tracks on the records which is one of the aspects of vinyls that attracts a lot of fans to invest.

21ST C. VINYL RENEWAL



Pandemic and Collectability

According to Cammoir associates' article on vinyl record resurrection, "In 2021, vinyl records enjoyed a 68% increase in total sales volume and a 55% increase in total sales revenue over 2020 in the US, reaching \$1 billion in sales for the first time since 1985." This increase was likely because during the COVID-19 lockdown people were bored and looking for new hobbies to pass their time, and the collectible nature of the vinyl records opened a new possibility.

SO WHAT MAKES VINYL SO GOOD?

There are many benefits and beautiful aspects of purchasing and listening to vinyl records, from having a physical copy of your favorite album's cover art to increased sound quality. To talk about the aesthetics of vinyl records, are just works of art from outside to inside crafted with so much care and thought, where one can access more intimate and interesting details on the process of creating the album, the music lyrics, and even in some cases they also come with special posters or stickers. Of course, it is a great way to support one's favorite artists as they are usually only given a fraction of the money earned from streaming platforms. However, purchasing a record ensures that the money directly goes to the artist. They also have better quality compared with digital formats as digital files are usually compressed to save storage which can reduce the quality of the audio however, with vinyl records, you can get a more authentic and warm sound. Not to forget to mention that there is nothing more relaxing in the world than spending hours in a record shop going through the records and when you finally make your purchase there is nothing more exciting and satisfying than peeling the plastic coverage and smelling the newly bought record. There are just so many aspects why people prefer vinyl and it is also as simple as people just preferring books over digital copies.

HOWEVER...

No rose comes without thorns as there are some cons to production and purchasing vinyl records. Currently, there is a very high demand for records and the producers have a hard time reaching the high demand. After the late 1980's many record-pressing plants went out of business with the introduction of CDs. By 2015 there were only 40 plants left that were working to produce records worldwide. Even though increased demand for vinyl records led to the introduction of new projects for new record-pressing plants, the industry still struggles to meet the requirements of the consumers.

And as we all know overconsumption of any product comes with its big package of environmental concerns. The main material used in the production of vinyl records is PVC (polyvinyl chloride - a type of synthetic polymer of plastic), which is not a very eco-friendly material. In addition, to protect the outer cover of the records non-biodegradable plastic packaging is used which creates more plastic waste. Nonetheless, the effects of vinyl production on the environment and the climate crisis can be very much reduced. It is a devastating fact that nearly 50% of record owners do not own a turntable, which reveals the chokehold that excess consumerism and capitalist practices like artists releasing several different versions of the same album on vinyl furthermore promoting this consumption has over people. One example of an artist who called out this unsustainable practice of other artists is Billie Eilish, who has been devoted to using sustainable packaging for vinyl records and or using recycled vinyl in the production of her records.

In my opinion, a vinyl record should be something special for a person, like a favorite album that you want to listen it over and over and take a look at the cover or the song lyrics, it shouldn't be some collector piece for displayed or stored somewhere to collect dust, they are works of art meant to be listened. When purchasing vinyl records be mindful of these facts and just enjoy the beautiful and authentic sound of it.

**WORDS BY CEMALIYE POLATCAN /
CYPRUS - BOSNIA&HERZEGOVINA**





山内亭

初めは乃
をり神楽
天の戸

霞仙亭

ぬるや
さるれ

A letter to my hometown.

You, my own personal 505 with your irreconcilable contradictions. How I have hated you at times. How I have loved you at times. How it took me so long to realize that the affection for places isn't confined to a binary of love and hate, but instead exist on a spectrum of longing and estrangement. You who with the salty breeze of the sea intoxicates me with nostalgia of long bygone summer days. Back in the summer days when the future seemed like an abstract dimension, that would never be capable of extending its grasp to me. Back when the future appeared to be a promised utopia of success and recognition. Back in the days of delusion before the ugly reality of how the future strangles you with concerns of financial stability and family formation, revealed itself to me. However, despite the merciless passing of time, you remained statically unchanged. The 6th graders, who experiment with cigarettes and alcohol for the first time at the orange plastic benches at the town square, are still there. They might be replaced by new 6th graders every year but sometimes it's because the cogs are frequently replaced that the machinery keeps running smoothly.

You who seem to exist and operate independently of the outside world, where wars and crimes have obtained an almost mythical status, as though all news of war could be as equally true as the action movies displayed on people's television. You who, despite your people's narrow understanding of the world situation, yet taught me fundamental insights to human existence. You who taught me discipline from distributing newspapers. You who taught me never again to be hungover in church. You who taught me friendship in countless sleepovers and long walks. You who taught me how undefeatable you feel when wake by the sun throwing its first rays on you and your teenage love. You whose static stage makes childhood memories of playing with grandparents, who have long since passed, and youthful memories of hidden kisses with the subsequent heartbreak merge into a single bittersweet tapestry of time. You who I yet felt the urge for leaving at the age of 16 with some wrecked glorified idea that moving to a big city would speed up the arrival of the long-awaited rewarding future. Perhaps the simultaneous painful and beautiful symphony of childhood within your realm could have lasted a bit longer, had I not chosen to break with you so suddenly.



However, though you're no longer physically embedded in my daily existence, you remain a defining force within me. So, dear hometown, you remain an inseparable part of my life. Dear hometown - As I listen to the awfully overplayed "End of beginning" I can't help but resonate with the line that many before me have resonated with: "You take the man out of the city not the city out the man", and I think about how accurate that is, for better or worse.





David Lynch was one of the greatest filmmakers of our time, producing works like *Blue Velvet*, *Eraserhead*, *Mulholland Drive*, and arguably his magnum opus, *Twin Peaks*. These masterpieces owe their prestige to Lynch's unparalleled storytelling; a grotesque blend of fever dreams bathed in primary hues, and hallucinogenic visions clouded by dissolving transitions, where sunburnt wet-thighed bodies dressed in sheets lie alongside paper-pale wet-lunged girls wrapped in plastic. All of this comes together to form an interconnected, sewn-together body of work that transcends screens and clocks, breaking and mending the line between the real and the surreal on every watch.

At the twisted heart of David Lynch's work lies duality; each individual project of his, but also his body of work as a whole can be seen as an exploration of where light fades to dark, and how the mundane contorts to the macabre. In *Blue Velvet*, a great introductory film to Lynch, the suburban idyll is merely a front for the perverted underbelly lying just beneath its pristine lawns and freshly-painted houses. *Twin Peaks* similarly masks its otherworldly horrors with "cherry pie" and a "damn fine cup of coffee". David Lynch's eagerness to

juxtapose these extremes is reflected in his deeper exploration of the human experience; most harrowingly, the hidden and unspeakable desires that crowd the soil beneath the Douglas firs of the Pacific Northwest are given the unforgiving spotlight in Lynch's *Twin Peaks: Fire Walk With Me*. Part of the *Twin Peaks* franchise, *Fire Walk With Me* is Lynch's homage to the character of Laura Palmer as we follow along for her final days. Beneath the façade of a homecoming queen lies addiction, abuse, and the ever-present evil; it is an inspection of reality's capacity for both unimaginable pain and transcendent resistance.

WORDS BY IRIS DIO- NYSI- OY

"In Dreams" by Roy Orbison is arguably the first non-original song that comes to mind when thinking about David Lynch. Used in *Blue Velvet*, it encapsulates the very essence of Lynch's world—where slow moody melodies, unsettling and hypnotic, create a ravishing dreamscape. The seemingly disconnected music used serves the surreal quality of his work seamlessly. In Lynch's world, time is not linear and space is undefined; scenes loop, characters shift, and the very fabric of reality frays at the edges. His films follow no rules, they operate strictly on flowering intuition and withering feelings.

Lynch's use of symbolism is almost eccentric and fully defining of his work. Anyone familiar with *Twin Peaks* would instantly recognize the red curtains and checkerboard floor, the slow dancing and contorted talking. These motifs often symbolise a shift of reality in Lynch's works; the curtains, barriers between worlds; the floors, disorienting and unstable; and the talking, fractured and off-putting. These themes stay with the viewer long after the film—or episode—is over, once they are utilised they are forever interwoven with the greatness of Lynch. They are symbols without clear meaning, creating feelings and interpretations equally unexplainable. His work gives us the opportunity to embrace the beautiful unknown, not only of his own world but also our own.

David Lynch died earlier this year, after 70 years of smoking; But in the echo of grainy old records and the faint glow of blue stage lights, Lynch's world forever lingers and bleeds into our own.



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My endless love,

I am writing to you now, though I may be far away from you, for whom I have been wandering around enormous cities rich in melancholy and charms, trying to find your whispers of secrets you keep buried in the history you lived in. And it is you, again, my dearest Istanbul, the capital of everything, where the West meets East, the mirror of sorrow and delight. And when it comes to Bosphorus, the silky silver ribbon, the rains and the winds that cry in its soul, connecting two continents, in the middle of both, but never belonging to either. Looks just like my heart, the pieces of me - stuck between past and present.

But how strange is it, my beloved, to fall in love with a place as one might fall in love with another soul - in fears and contradictions, placed in mystery! Istanbul is both modern and ancient, brutal yet delicate, a place where time freezes, but never is quite asleep. And those contradictions that keep something truly arrogant. Each corner I turn brings a reminder of human life, of our own struggles, triumphs. The minarets that pierce the sky, reaching towards unlimited places, something that seems so distant, and those narrow streets that get lost into the depths of the city's heart, where each step is closer to a journey through its own past.

There are moments when I just stand there by the Bosphorus, and I feel hugged by it, as if the coast reaches its hands to me, talks through the waves and cries with me in those gloomy rains, combs my hair through the winds from East, and looks at me with heavy flutes. How many souls, I wonder, have passed this way before me, whole and broken, who have buried themselves in these windows of horizons? I imagine it now, those hands of Istanbul around me..for in my mind, you are never going to be far.

Are there any words available to show grandiose Hagia Sophia..? How its silence brings the chills of those heavy prayers from many centuries ago, and that spirited life of the Grand Bazaar, where the air is visible - filled with colors, scents, voices, laughs - all awakening the soul not with the language that is spoken, but felt.

And it's not the enormous figure of Istanbul that moves me, but a soft, melancholy sound of a prayer in dusk, as dawn comes - the sun baths itself in the landscape of Bosphorus. And I, standing on the edge of everything, where Istanbul is like a bridge connecting two sides of me, between the known and unknown, somewhere between a smile from one side of the face and despair. Hope and dissolution.

My beloved wears its deepest wounds with pride. Its walls - edged with the passage of time, all carrying different countless stories. What is it like in my heart..? For me, too, I am wounded, yet feeling tied to this palace of dreams and history, ancient love chains, and an aching desire to always come back, in the middle of sorrow and its beauty.

Perhaps, Istanbul has my side; it's not merely a city, but a reflection of my own heart - thorns between love and loss - a heart searching for a meaning in a world. In some strange way, for me, Istanbul equals love. The tears and the smiles, the souls and the arrogance. It is my escape and anchor, my longing and my comfort.

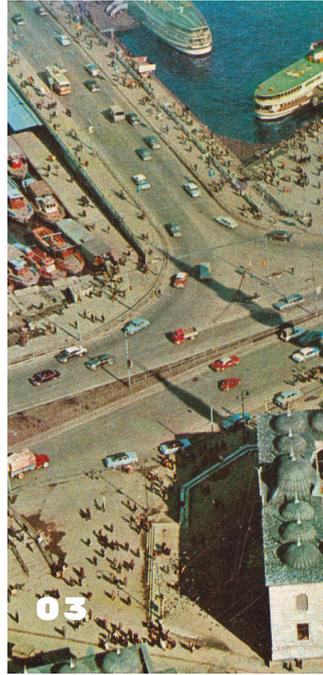
And Istanbul...one day I will tell you all of the anecdotes of my life before you. I promise.

Forever yours,
Selma.

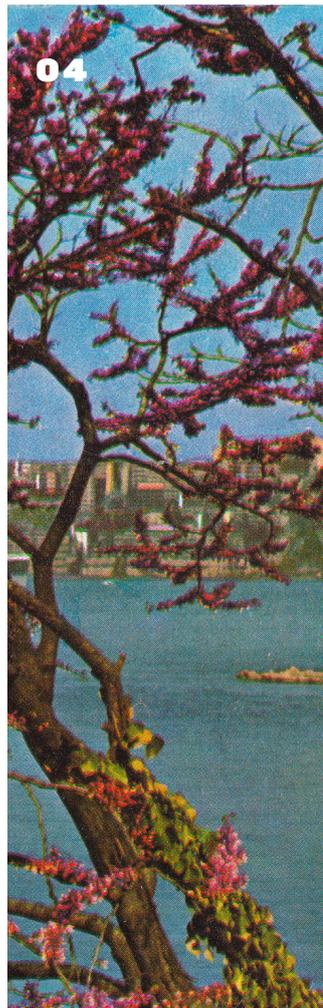
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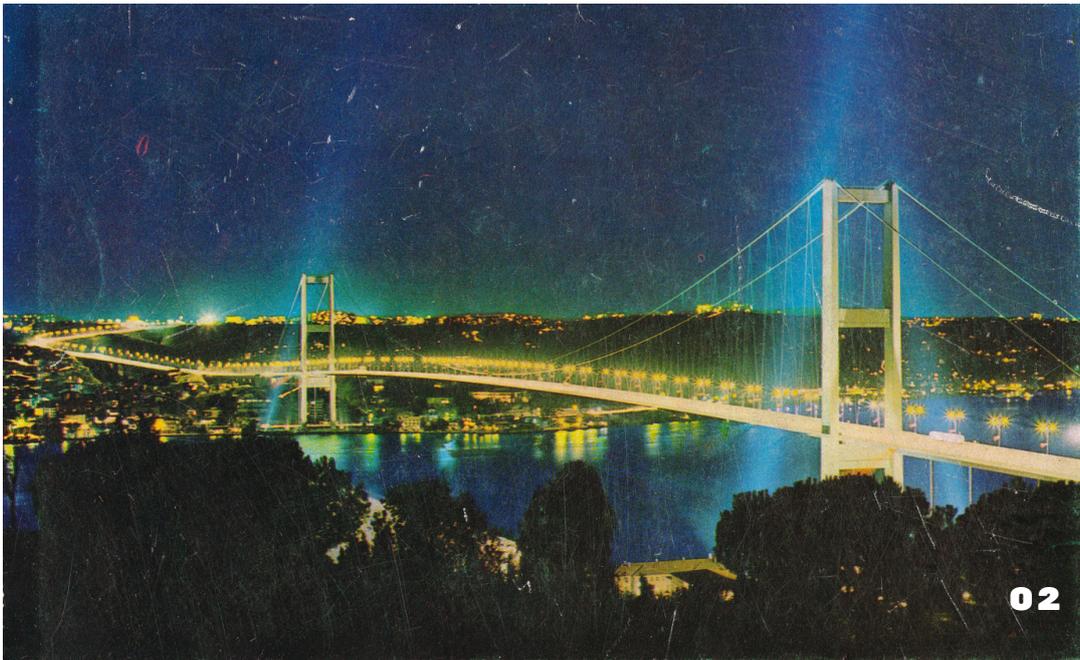
03



04



02





ISTANBUL CIRCA 2008

**01. ŞEMSI AHMET PAŞA
CAMII
SHEMSI AHMET PASHA
MOSQUE**

**02. BOĞAZ KÖPRÜSÜ
THE BOSPHORUS BRIDGE**

**03. YENİ CAMII
THE MOSQUE OF "YENİ
CAMI"**

**04. BAHARDA, ERGUVAN
ÇİÇEKLERİ ARASINDAN
KIZKULESİNİN GÖRÜNÜŞÜ
THE VIEW OF THE
LEANDER'S TOWER THROUGH
THE JUDAEA'S TREES**

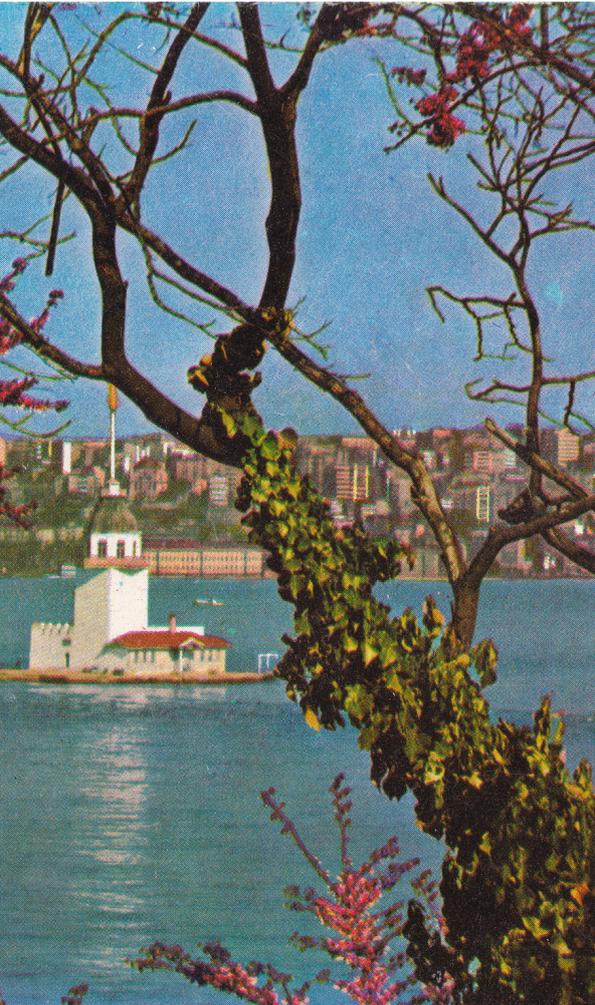






PHOTO BY LANA GAGULA / SARAJEVO, BOSNIA&HERZEGOVINA



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