People of Wax on Manners Street.

In the town in which the wind never ceases to blow there exist two benches I enjoy sitting on. One of them is located by the school of Architecture, five minutes away from where I live.

The other is located on Wakefield Street by the Michael Fowler center where graduations take place twice a year.

That's exactly where the artefact "Geometric Progression" by Guy Ngan, designed in 1974 and relocated in 2006 is now placed. That is where we stood for a coffee, once in the beginning.

That one was a late, forbidden love. The sky of the late afternoon was gloomy as viewed through the oval window of my studio apartment. We were both together there and our souls were thirsting for something of an indefinite shape and size.

Perhaps something that was bound to overcome the mundane of our daily habits and activities. She had the best sense of being humorous I have ever encountered.

She came back recently from a snowboarding camp in Canada a few months before where she spent about a year or so and she did mention that that gap year was the time of her life.

She mentioned other things too, personal and impersonal alike. For example she did not hesitate to criticize me for my shallowness in relating to females.

I was twenty-nine years old. She was twenty-one.

We've met on campus, on the hallway just outside my office where she was waiting for an assignment submission.

Yet we managed to retreat for a coffee on Wakefield Street. 115 Wakefield, if you get there sit down for fifteen minutes by the Royal School of Ballet, while gazing towards the Michael Fowler center where formal graduations take place twice a year.

Manners Street was a favourite of mine those days, together with the madras sauce I used to enjoy with fat succulent pieces of lamb, at a restaurant that's not there these days.

The people expressed concerns back in those days and they were worried about the direction things were going. I remember one man shouting in Parliament about the

computer system Sky Net from Terminator 2 which was about to take over the world. Yet nobody would've thought the world was going to the dogs to the extent that it went.

Nowadays the locals are purely terrified. I mean the locals, people that have always been here, people that were always in this town, people that have been here even before the savage gun attack at the mosque up the hill which Police called the darkest day in our nation's history.

These days the people that pass by, a great many of them, are made out of wax. They have no memories, only purpose, no love, only lust, they don't do, they expect, they don't work that much, all they do is train for an activity which is to come.

It is entirely futile to tell a person made out of wax that for each person made out of wax there could exist, as far as I know, thirty other persons made out of wax that looked exactly like them. That sort of thing is entirely futile.

As for ten years ago, I think Love is a necessary good. I'm unsure of how to express this properly, yet Love always seems bliss in the past tense. It is pleasant in the present tense too, yet in the present tense it may become bitter-sweet in taste, garnished with a tad of anxiety.

Yet in the past tense, Love becomes that mysterious giant octopus that gazes at us from immense oneiric depths, dreams us, guides us towards new horizons of unseen meaning.

I also think that without memories which we do obviously cherish and I mean by this: without a coherent past that we love and to which we are perhaps attached, without all of these things I don't think we'd be what we really are.

That's what I think about all of this. In any case, the cricket grown across the street is still there in the north-west of town. The trolley electric paths in the north of town disappeared together with curry place on Manners Street.

Manners Street is still called Manner Street. Yet the passers-by are totally different these days. They are all made out of wax.

■ *Valentin Bura*