

Featured Artist: Where Are They Now?

Featured artists have always been an integral part of C Magazine. Their individual art forms, whether they be music, cooking or fashion design, have been showcased in an individual profile throughout the magazine's history. Now, C Magazine has brought back some favorite past featured artists to explore how their passions have evolved from their first exhibition on our pages and to hear their hopes for work in the future.

A Transition From the Kitchen

Since his last feature in C Magazine, Alex Thom has had to find a new love for food

Adding the final touches to his favorite pasta dish, cacio e pepe, and serving it to his family for the last time, Paly alum Alex Thom prepares to embrace a new reality.

Since his feature in C Magazine almost two years ago, Thom has transformed his passion for cooking as he moved on to college.

"I applied to Cornell which is well known for its agriculture school," Thom said.

Thom is currently a sophomore at Cornell, majoring in food science. This major has allowed him to expand his passion and love for food in a different way, as he does less hands-on work and more problem-solving and research within the food system.

"I have not had much time to cook when I am at college," Thom said. "Whenever I go home for breaks I try to cook a lot."

College life has restricted Thom's ability to cook due to busy work hours and limited supplies. Thom went from cooking almost every day during his senior year of high

school to almost never cooking while living at college. Now, when coming back home for school breaks, Thom makes the most out of the time he has in an environment suited for cooking.

"Over the past summer I was cooking a lot," Thom said. "This summer and last summer I was working for a family friend as a private chef."

Thom still finds the same love for cooking as he continues to practice his skills in the kitchen. Whether it be for friends, his own family or even strangers, Thom is still very passionate about cooking.

"I know a lot of people who find cooking to be a chore and it's something they don't enjoy doing," Thom said. "But for me, it's a way of relaxing and making the most out of the time I have at home."

Thom has found much enjoyment in an activity many people dread having to do every day. He is able to turn cooking into a fun and creative art form.

"It really just comes down to the basic

enjoyment and the relaxation I find from cooking," Thom said.

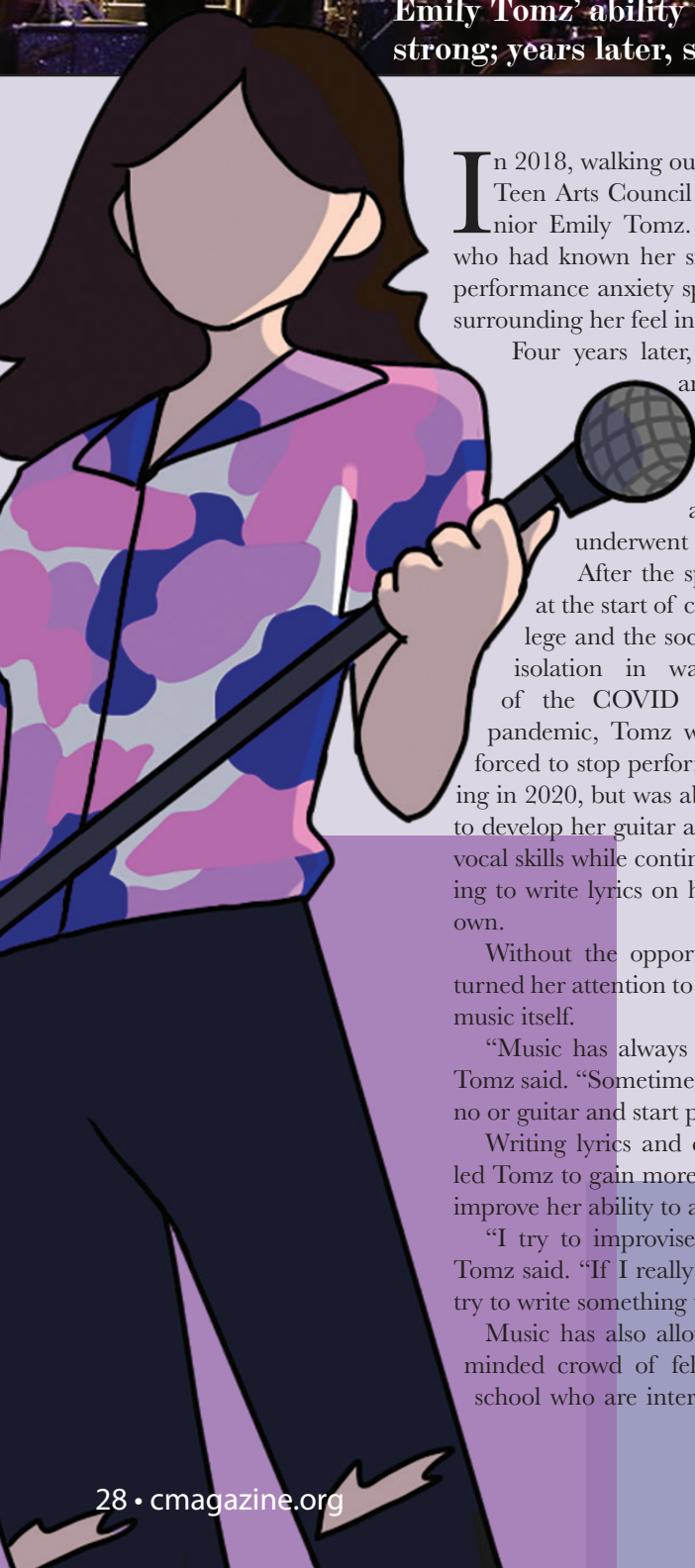
Thom has put a lot of commitment into cooking and continues to find enjoyment and relaxation in it after all these years. With college making it difficult to find time and continue to pursue his passion for hands-on cooking, Thom found a balance that works for him.





Behind the Mic

Emily Tomz' ability to express her emotions through music has always been strong; years later, she's been able to improve her confidence alongside it



In 2018, walking out on stage at the Palo Alto Teen Arts Council was terrifying to then junior Emily Tomz. Being watched by peers who had known her since childhood made her performance anxiety spike, and the expectations surrounding her feel intimidatingly high.

Four years later, Tomz has finally found an environment where she can rock out comfortably with friends and family, experiencing considerably less stress than she underwent in high school.

After the split of her previous band at the start of college and the social isolation in wake of the COVID 19 pandemic, Tomz was forced to stop performing in 2020, but was able to develop her guitar and vocal skills while continuing to write lyrics on her own.

Without the opportunity to perform, Tomz turned her attention to the process of making the music itself.

"Music has always been this outlet for me," Tomz said. "Sometimes I just sit down at the piano or guitar and start playing."

Writing lyrics and creating chords on guitar led Tomz to gain more technical experience and improve her ability to artistically express herself.

"I try to improvise and find some chords," Tomz said. "If I really liked the chords, then I'll try to write something that fits it."

Music has also allowed Tomz to find a like-minded crowd of fellow students at her new school who are interested in song production.

She's formed a group with friends from her soccer team, and they often meet up to have jam sessions and enjoy each other's company.

"I think it was way harder in high school, because you're in front of literally all your peers, but in college you don't know people as closely," Tomz said. "I think my confidence has improved immensely over the years."

Through all of the ups and downs of moving away from home, the pandemic and the struggle to recruit new band members, maintaining the same level of practice she once had has been difficult, with writer's block and inhibition preventing Tomz from continuing her usual flow of inspiration.

"I feel like maybe I'm just more particular with what I decided to write about and the lyrics I like to use," Tomz said. "Maybe I'm hard on myself, because before I would kind of let stuff flow and write random stuff all the time. Maybe

it's time for more of that."

The last few years have not been without struggle and Tomz's experience with music has changed drastically, but she has continued to improve her talents and works to get back into her natural flow of creation.

To her, the future is full of opportunities—she wants to start a new band and eventually return to her performing roots.

"Sometimes it's scary performing, especially when you're performing the songs that you've written yourself... but I'm just not really gonna care," Tomz said. "Music will never go away for me."

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Emily Tomz**

Art on The Mind

After Faustine Wang's game "Bounce Battle," she has continued intertwining cognitive science and art while designing more games

A game called "Flower Shower" boots up, and a familiar charming 8-bit art style appears. Using the arrow keys and spacebar to control a deer, the deer jumps and catches large flowers, while shaking off insects and avoiding branches. This is one of Paly alumna Faustine Wang's new games that she created. Since her feature in C Magazine's March 2021 article, Wang's relationship with art has naturally progressed.

"I think [my interest] has slightly changed, but generally it's still the same," Wang said. "... In a way it's like a continuity, but I'm [also] discovering new things."

Art has been a part of the majority of Wang's life and as such the process has become ingrained into her mind.

"Honestly, at this point [art] is almost like a habit," Wang said. "[It's] kind of just something I do. I think that a lot of people might say [art] is like a passion. I describe it more as a habit."

Creating art has become more personal to Wang. She no longer caves into the pressure to constantly show others what she has drawn.

"In the past, I had the pressure of having to post [art] onto Instagram," Wang said. "I actually have not posted in a long time but I think it's okay. I make art for myself now."

Furthermore, Wang continues to mix

her interest in computer science with her talent for design. One aspect of art that ties into Wang's interest for game design is user experience, or the focus on a users' feelings when using a product.

"I... recently learned about user experience design, user interface design, and just design in general," Wang said. "It seems like a very direct way of creating a visual and interacting with your audience."

"By learning how people think and process information, we are able to pay more attention to user-friendly and human oriented design and art."

Faustine Wang

In addition to her creations in her freetime, Wang also works as the Art Manager for ACM (Association for Computing Machinery)

studio, a game design club.

"We [at ACM studio] have to make sure that we [are] able to create something that is visually pleasing, and also something that helps make a story come alive," Wang said.

Despite Wang's dedication and passion for art, she is not studying an art related major. Instead, Wang is majoring in cognitive science at UCLA.

"I ended up going into cognitive science, because it was intellectually interesting to me," Wang said. "In addition to art, I really like to think about philosophy, psychology and how people think."

Interestingly, Wang finds that cognitive psychology and art are actually related.

"I'm learning more about how cog sci [cognitive science], design and art meet [at] this one discipline because a lot of

people majoring in cog sci actually end up going into user experience and user interface," Wang said. "By learning how people think and process information, we are able to pay more attention to user-friendly and human oriented design and art."

Given their relation, Wang views cognitive science as an extension of her art.

"For me, because I like to make art that kind of expresses information and symbols, I can find nuggets of information that I find interesting in cog sci and put them into my art," Wang said. "Recently, I found the ethical issues and also the implications of artificial intelligence interesting. [Artificial intelligence] is also something that cog sci people like to work on and use to study cognition. So... exploring that through art is interesting as well."

In 2021, Wang and her friends created Artruism, a nonprofit organization that commissions art for charity. Over the summer they hosted a series of art workshops at an elementary school in Sacramento.

"Being able to bring art into education was very interesting," Wang said. "I think that art is able to bring good into [our] lives," Wang said.

Though Wang's main focus in college is not art, she still believes that art is important to the world.

"I think we like to think about art and entertainment as separate from computer science, but in reality, we as humans need art," Wang said. "[Art] intertwines with a lot of different disciplines which is able to make our world a nicer place to live; I wouldn't want to live in a bland, purely utilitarian world. Art just creates more soul and spirit."

Les Bains, or Les Bains Douches, is a nightclub and former bath house (built 1885) in the third arrondissement of Paris. Opened as a club in 1978, Les Bains was the place to be. Musicians, designers, models, and creatives of all types, spilled onto its checkered floors to dance the night away.

The club was frequented by the spirited Yves and his crew where he was inspired by the young party goers.

This collection is dedicated to that velvet draped, tiled temple of debauchery. Where the sophisticated, lit-gild of Paris goes when the sun dips beyond the horizon. Where the music is loud, the crowd is alive, and the night turns into a blur of sequined sparkle.



As Amanda McVey continues to work in the fashion industry, her love of fashion only grows

In her bedroom in New York City, a young blonde woman stands before her term finals piece, an elegant pink garment for her draping class. Now a sophomore at the Fashion Institute of Technology, Paly alumna Amanda McVey has managed to turn her dream since seven years old into a reality.

Since her feature in *C Magazine* almost two years ago, McVey's love for fashion design has continued.

"I think [my love for fashion design has] just grown," McVey said. "It's expanded and it's all encompassing."

As a fashion student in college, McVey is given many opportunities to design and create her own pieces. To begin, McVey is given a theme, typically a designer or a season. McVey then performs trend research, where she finds what brands and themes are in season.

"It [trend research] kind of feels like be-

ing a spy," McVey said. "I can see what's going to be trending a year from now, whether [it's] this kind of color, this kind of shirt [or] skirt. We can get as specific as that."

McVey then draws out variations of a design before choosing the best from each category of clothes that she is designing. After thinking through fabric swatches, McVey

moves to the final rendering of the outfit. If McVey is creating a physical design, a muslin form, using cheaper material to test patterns, is created from the drawing before she sews together the final fabric.

For each of her assignments, McVey tends to design around her self-defined aesthetic.

"I would say [my aesthetic] is refined, elegant, sophisticated and also modern," McVey said. "Really just appreciating subtleties, like subtle luxury."

"[Fashion] touches everyone... I love being able to be creative and to express myself and for other people to express themselves in such an interesting way"

Amanda McVey

Since her favorite pink cocktail dress from the 2019 Parsons School of Design summer program, McVey has created more designs that she holds close to her heart. For a project where she was required to pair a theme and another artist, McVey paired the theme of soft, fluid fabrics inspired by Madeleine Vionnet, a designer from the 1920s and 30s, with painter Georgia O'Keeffe.

"I really love it, it's a very elegant piece," McVey said.

Looking to her future in the fashion industry, McVey wants to be part of a fashion brand.

"I would love to see myself work my way up in a brand and potentially become a creative director," McVey said.

Specifically, McVey wants to join the team at Ralph Lauren.

"My design aesthetic personally aligns with the brand," McVey said. "If I'm designing something that doesn't feel like me, it's harder to be passionate about it and relate to it."

Though McVey has been enjoying her time at FIT, there are hardships when it comes to fashion design. "[FIT's] program is so rigorous; it becomes your whole life,"

McVey said. "You pour yourself into it [and] it does take a lot from you and it can be draining."

McVey has had to accept that there are certain aspects of her life that she must prioritize more than others, such as her modeling career. While McVey still works for her company Dennis Basso, her focus has shifted more towards fashion design.

"I think I've come to terms with the fact that I only have so much time to pursue the things I want to do," McVey said. "At this time, fashion design is my focus."

McVey continues to pour her heart into design and school, taking on a positive mindset in face of difficulties.

"I think what makes me come back to [design] is that I just love creating," McVey said. "[I] can be struggling along in the process,

but when it's done, it's like, 'wow, I made that and look what I put out into the world.' Even if it didn't come out entirely how I liked it... I always learn something, and I think that's what matters the most."

Though McVey is aware her future is uncertain, she has no doubts that fashion design is what she wants to do now.

"[Fashion] touches everyone, whether they want to be involved in the industry or not," McVey said. "We all have to wear clothes, and clothes all say something about us... they can be expressive and an art form. I love being able to be creative and to express myself and for other people to express themselves in such an interesting way."



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