

My first definition of “design” came at the tender age of four, when my mother - a fashion major - flipped through the monthly editions of Vogue and Elle that were shipped monthly to our suburban home. I watched, awed, as she leafed through spread after spread - every page, it seemed, was a Smithsonian-worthy work of art - a gorgeous, contemporary blend of text and art.

But “design”, to me, didn’t stay at home. At school, the TIME for Kids issues they distributed every so often continued that interest. Unlike fashion magazines, these masterpieces turned daily figures - from politicians to kids like myself - into stories worth telling. This early introduction into regular journalism spurred my first interests in design, and by middle school, I made sure to join my school newspaper, spending hours after school to plan story layouts on whiteboards and poster paper.

High school, however, split design into three sections - photography, writing, and illustration. I walked into the newsroom thinking I had an upperhand, giving my middle school experience, but I was completely thrown off guard. I’d never even heard of ISO or aperture, nor had I ever laid my hands on Adobe Creative Cloud. I can only remember the near-overwhelming surge of knowledge the upperclassmen thrust upon the freshmen that year, but I was fascinated by the newsmagazines they churned out every month, so I scrambled to remember every click and every keyboard command.

But it was through these 4 years, however, where I discovered that “design” extends beyond the mere technicality of knowing what every button does on Adobe Photoshop, Illustrator, and Indesign. In life, it encompasses everything - from the product design on the Starbucks iced coffee cup that accompanies me as I write this statement, to the UI/UX design of the Google Docs site I use to type this statement. However, in journalism, it encompasses how we communicate the stories that define humanity. It can mean something as simple as a choice in fonts - a contrast between serif and sans serif for antiquity and modernity, or the difference between capitalizing every word and capitalizing every letter - a trend occurring right now as news headlines blare the overturn of *Roe v. Wade*.

I teach this mindset, as editor-in-chief, to my staffers today, hoping to spur on a new generation of journalist-designers. I encourage them to both analyze and create, to be artists as well as researchers, and practice these skills each month when we start a new publishing cycle. Each issue starts with a very rough sketch on the meme-laden whiteboard in the back, complete with gallons of bubble tea from the latest school fundraiser. The sketch sees its first draft in the cutouts and vectors constructed on Indesign and Illustrator, before coming together with fonts and text on Indesign, and concluding with the flourish of clicking “upload” and the treat of a long, well-deserved nap.

As I head off to college next year, I will carry the lessons that design has taught me. I’m so incredibly grateful to my staff - the team that has guided me on this journey (shoutout to my adviser) and I cannot wait to see how you will continue to grow.

1. Cheating (cover)

Coming out of COVID-19, the rate of cheating reports spiked at my school. I wanted to convey both the severity of the issue as well as the reason most students cheated. The dark grey, textured background represents the convoluted, unsaid conversations around cheating, but the spotlight and the “lit” condition A+ represents the grades most students are willing to sacrifice academic integrity for - our school has some of the highest scores in the state, with a self-induced pressure among students to maintain them at all costs. The red represents the moral complexity of the issue - acting as a warning sign as a generation of students grow up resorting to cheating.

2. Oh, K Dog

This restaurant opened very recently, with the design of its interior paying homage to the Korean trends of minimalism and roundedness. I wanted to bring that aspect yet, adopting the warm orange-yellow color for the outline and coordinating that with the golden-brown of the photo. The grunge-look of the logo’s background emulated the concrete floor and yellow-grey combination, creating a warm, inviting atmosphere.

3. In Memoriam

The Pantone color of 2022 is “Very Peri”, a light, pastel, indigo-purple color. That was the inspiration for many of the year’s runway events at the Spring Paris Fashion Week. Working with Cameron, a passionate fashion writer on staff, we chose color-coordinating looks of recent renowned Black designers who had passed, seeking to honor both their work and the various layers of art and color they brought to life.

4. Municipal vs. Federal Elections

For every political issue, the 10th amendment is nearly always debated. Rather than simply using red and blue - as that would have corresponded to political parties rather than the 10th amendment debates - I represented the opposing sides through empty space instead of strictly by color.

5. Senior Issue Cover

The final issue of the year represented the class of 2022 - a class that had survived a year and a half of quarantine, and led the rest of the school through the first year back in-person. I wanted to capture the scenes of jubilation that marked this milestone, so I did a photoshoot in the bus lines outside of our school. I combined that with a brush stroke font, whose lack of structure combined with light blue and white to create a sense of lightheartedness and joy.



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CHEATING

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Oh, K-Dog

The Messenger's monthly digest

BEDANSH PANDEY, COPY EDITOR

Tucked neatly between Sumo Hibachi & Wings and Poké bar off Medlock Bridge Road sits Oh, K-Dog, a new Korean hot dog restaurant that prides itself in creating a fresh, new taste for the deep fried snack. I've personally never tried Korean hot dogs before (or really any Korean food for that matter) and was impressed by the restaurant's attention to detail as well as its general ambiance. Immediately upon entry, I was greeted by the wafting smell of rice flour batter and the K-pop music playing softly in the background.

At first glance, the menu was almost overwhelming. There were hot dogs of nearly every permutation, ranging from the classic Korean hot dog to even a hot dog composed almost entirely of rice cake. Thankfully, though, the manager of the restaurant recommended that my friends and I try the Oh! K Classic Hot Dog, Premium Beef Hot Dog, and Mozza Dog. What struck me the most came not when we were making the decision

of which hot dog to buy, but when we were paying; the total cost came down to around \$15, with each hot dog costing roughly \$4. As an unemployed high school student, this is a fairly cheap price for a meal so filling. Though I didn't order them, the restaurant also offers its signature toasts: the teriyaki and egg toast, the bacon and cheese toast, as well as the avocado egg toast.

As we waited for our order (which didn't take too long), we were able to get a full view of our order being cooked—the chef skewering the sausage and mozzarella onto the stick, then coating it in the sticky batter, and finally rolling them onto panko breadcrumbs. The process seemed incredible, and it heightened my anticipation. We also walked around the restaurant as the chef fried the dogs, attempting to pinpoint what exactly made the vibe of this place so inviting. Was it the rather dim, incandescent yellow lighting that lined the walls? Or even the videos of people trying Korean hot dogs for the first time flashing on



the TVs? Could it also be the manager, who was actively monitoring the cooking process while checking in on us every five minutes? Either way, I was impressed by the restaurant's success in simulating a street-side Korean fast-food restaurant environment within the Johns Creek Village shopping area.

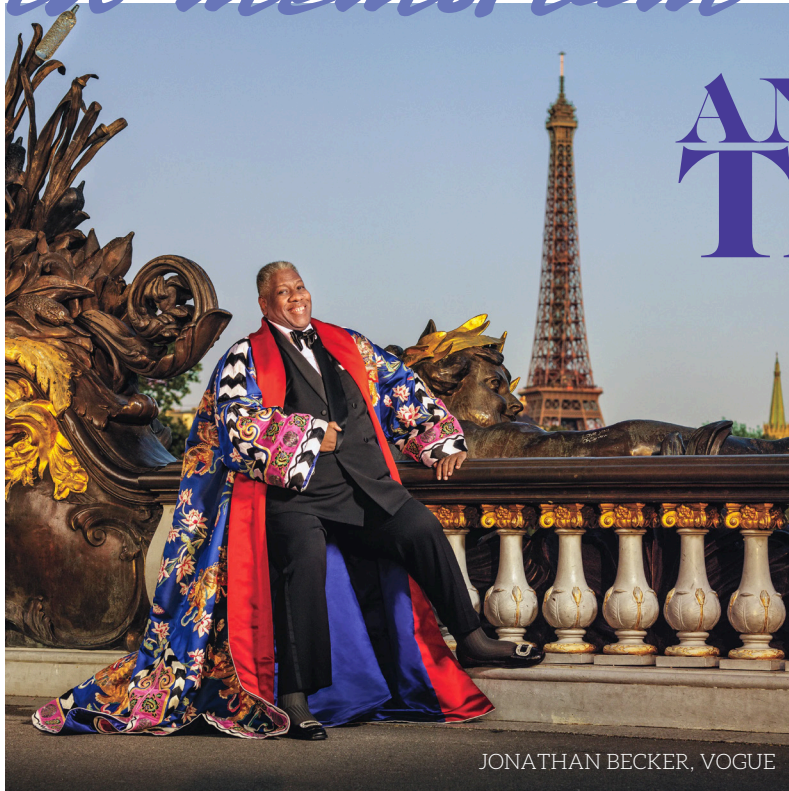
True to this theme, our orders were served in small plastic baskets—exactly the kind of thing that goes with the overall street-side vision that is the restaurant's core. The manager recommended several sauces to put on our hot dogs and even sprinkled some sugar onto them to add to the flavoring. I took the first bite of my hot dog and was met by the world of tastes that were a culmination of the hand-crafted batter and sauces. The layering of the batter and panko breadcrumbs, however, was undoubtedly the best part of the Korean hot dog, even better than the inside. I look forward to coming back to Oh, K-Dog some other time, for a quick, cheap, and mouth-watering snack nearby Northview. 🍌

fashion

CAMERON CHAPPELL, STAFF WRITER

in memoriam

ANDRÉ LEON TALLEY



JONATHAN BECKER, VOGUE

Following the recent back-to-back deaths of Black fashion industry trailblazers Virgil Abloh and André Leon Talley, a reflection on the impact they continue to have in the worldwide fashion industry is long overdue.

Talley, the former fashion editor and first Black male creative director at Vogue, is remembered for being larger than life and transforming fashion journalism. His impeccable knowledge was accompanied by a unique sense of style—Talley was frequently seen wearing capes to match his bold demeanor and impressive stature. When expressing his love for the fashion community, Talley noted that the affection was not often reciprocated. He made it a point to push himself into new spaces and make room for others like himself. Talley interned for influential figures in the industry, leading him to work for Ebony magazine, and his engaging personality later landed him a position as a Vogue Met Gala red carpet interviewer and his own radio show.

Despite the posthumous praise for his contributions to fashion and his status as a Black fashion trailblazer, Talley never received the proper recognition and respect he deserved from other designers while he was alive. His story was one filled with enormous talent, a passion for fashion, and mistreatment from an oftentimes brutal industry. Talley's vision, which triumphed over the numerous attempts to silence his voice, will live on through your nearest fashion magazine.



Talley and supermodel Naomi Campbell, at Tanqueray Sterling Ball, 1989
RON GALELLA, GETTY IMAGES



Talley and Campbell, Gianni Versace show, 1991
SPECIAL, VANITY FAIR

VIRGIL ABLOH



Abloh at Paris Fashion Week, Spring/Summer 2020.
EDWARD BERTHELOT, GETTY IMAGES

Best known for his own fashion label “Off-White” and his work as Louis Vuitton’s artistic director for menswear collections from 2018 until his death in November 2021, Abloh was among the past decade’s most creative fashion designers. He presented everyday clothing in an innovative manner, and the futuristic approach of his collections bridge the gap between high fashion and streetwear. Abloh’s mission was to open the doors for other designers to do the same. During Paris Fashion Week In January, Louis Vuitton debuted Abloh’s last collection, with many of his closest industry friends and celebrities in attendance.

“ Art is made in hindsight. ”

Virgil Abloh

His latest work made an appearance in the 2022 Beijing Winter Olympics through a custom-designed luggage set gifted to American snowboarder Shaun White. Though Abloh’s vision has become a blueprint that will shape the fashion community for years to come, his knack for producing highly-coveted, quality pieces while staying true to himself and his roots may never be replicated.

Though the powerful impact Black culture has made is undeniable, the designers behind this work are rarely acknowledged. The conversations in the fashion community must progress and produce more opportunities for Black creators to showcase their talents. ♣



Abloh’s collection, Off-White Fall 2022 Ready to Wear.
FILIPPO FIOR and ARMANDO GRILLO, GORUNWAY.COM

FACE OFF

ARE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS MORE
IMPORTANT THAN FEDERAL ELECTIONS?



YES

REAGAN HORNE, STAFF WRITER

It doesn't come as a shock that most people respond with a "no" when asked if they voted during a local election. People, especially those in younger generations, still remain blind to the significance of local elections in their communities. National elections have stolen the limelight, and citizens seem to believe their votes only really matter during presidential elections, which is false. National elections occur every four years, while local elections occur every two years, meaning the urgency of voting is far more important than waiting every presidential election to cast their votes. New bills are passed, urgent issues surface, etc.

Municipal elections are important because local governments have the ability to affect day-to-day issues; police training, education funding, local infrastructure, and more all fall under the jurisdiction of local elected officials. By voting in local elections, citizens determine who they want to fight for their rights, improve their children's education system, and reform

the criminal justice and jail system. With the rise of gun violence and police brutality in recent years, it is increasingly urgent that citizens exercise their power to influence the policies that will affect them most.

During the current mayoral election in Johns Creek, candidates tackled their views and intended action on pressing issues in the area that included; affordable housing and public safety. Once elected, either good or bad change will rise to the surface.

The Harvard Political Review, which partook in the debate over the importance of national versus municipal elections, found that though the federal government attempted to acknowledge detrimental issues, it rarely passed policies that effectively addressed said issues.

In Georgia's recent municipal elections for mayors and city council members, voter turnout declined significantly compared to the turnout for U.S. Senate races during the 2020 national elections. Due to early voting, the

turnouts at the elections decreased by 3.8% to increase in turnouts to 3.1%. The low voter turnout in local elections demonstrates the current lack of motivation and responsibility citizens feel towards improving their communities.

The time to act is now. It is crucial that voters recognize the challenges their communities face, and that to wait for a new president to be elected is irresponsible, when there are urgent issues local officials can resolve in the meantime. Understanding mayoral and city council candidates' potential for enormous impact on daily life is more important than deciding a new leader for the country every four years based on his or her political party. Citizens across the nation must wake up and realize that the controversy stirred up by national elections has blinded them to the events that truly matter.

NO

MEGAN SERFONTEIN, COPY EDITOR

Adding lanes on McGinnis Ferry Road, fixing the storm water runoff issues, or even restructuring waste management are tasks the Johns Creek City Council and various mayors have debated over for years. But beyond the minor inconveniences of life that municipal elections can fix, national elections are the ones that matter when it comes to grim life or death issues. While citizens should always vote, missing out on a city council election carries less consequences than missing out on a congressional or presidential race.

One of the most important issues in almost all national elections is healthcare. According to the 2020 Census, 34.8% of Americans with healthcare, or roughly 106 million people, were on some form of public health insurance. For many, the difference between having and not having insurance means refusing to seek medical assistance help until emergencies arise. Often,

this means it is too late for medical interference. In fact, the National Center for Biotechnology Information reports that 26,000 people a year die because of lack of insurance. Since public healthcare is a federally-run program, votes in national elections decide whether thousands of Americans live longer, healthier, and happier lives or die preemptive deaths.

While local school boards and city councils may decide how to allocate funds to individual public schools, the bigger issues in education, especially regarding higher education, still fall under federal jurisdiction. Currently, 43.2 million Americans face some form of student loan debt, with an average of \$30,000 of debt. For the average American, it takes about 20 years to pay off a bachelor's degree and 45 years to pay off post-graduate degrees. As a result, many skip out on the opportunity to pursue a higher education and instead fall victim to a cycle of

continual poverty. The dismissal and cancellation of student loans, a move only the federal government can make through the federal bank system, would allow for a more educated and larger workforce.

The issues of healthcare and education are decade long battles that affect almost every American and can only be solved by voting in federal elections. Meanwhile, the impact of local elections are limited to cities or towns, and sometimes the issues don't even really affect the people who live there.

Although local elections can help fix the daily hassles of life, federal elections are a means for citizens to protect their families and neighbors from facing life-altering or even life-and-death situations. The traffic issues on Rogers Bridge Road don't hold a candle to the choices made during federal elections. 🗳️

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*The Messenger's annual
list of future plans*

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