

Video Series: [Music on \[REC\]ord](#)

I feel the most myself when I am at a concert. The environment of the bass blaring, the musicians fully in-sync with one another is one of the most gratifying experiences to have. Luckily, I have the unique position of being a writer on one of the only High School music magazines in the country. Many schools have a music section, but my magazine is specifically an Arts, Culture, and Music magazine, which means that we focus at least a few stories on every issue on a specific topic happening in music.

I have always drawn inspiration from NPR for their authentic reporting and ability to humanize their subjects. Especially their Tiny Desk, where musicians performed at an unassuming desk in their headquarters in Washington DC. For this story, I interviewed the lead Director and Producer of Tiny Desk along with the people behind MTV Unplugged and other professionals working in the recorded live music industry.

After writing and publishing this story at the end of last school year, I wanted to continue exploring this subject. I spent this current school year recording and editing another installation to finish a three-part series of live recordings. Each artist sang a mix of covers and original songs, which I directed, filmed, and organized. I learned a lot from their choices of songs, some of which spoke more deeply to the human experience. For example, one of my musicians, David Tomz, chose to sing “Big Yellow Taxi” by Joni Mitchell and later explained that climate change was a pressing issue that was on his mind, and his singing was an outlet to express it.



Many of these student artists had never been recorded before, and they were excited to be given the opportunity to share their art with our readers. Watching them play their instruments, whether it was a bass guitar, the drums, or even the cello, added a lot of depth to the listening experience.

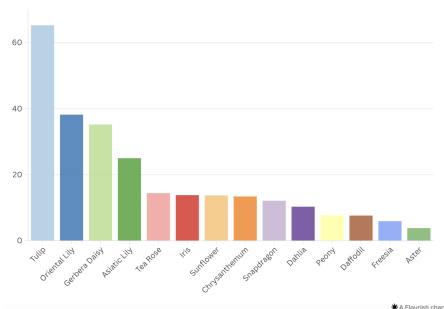
Music on Record won first place in the Digital Arts & Entertainment video category of the Journalism Educators Association of Northern California [Contest](#) in 2025

Data Visualization: [In Full Bloom](#)

This year, we made our first Environmental themed issue and instead of our traditional featured artist, we decided to make a profile of a flower arranger. I interviewed Leo Terman, who will be heading to Stanford University this fall. He attributed a lot of his academic success to studying and

arranging flowers. He would take flowers from a farm, arrange them, and then gift them to elderly members of the community. In my interview with Leo, he told me that picking and arranging flowers had become an escape the summer that his parents got separated. This story touched me

Annual sales revenue of the best selling cut flowers in the United States in 2019, in million U.S. dollars
Source: US Department of Agriculture



because of his honesty and willingness to share with me. As a fellow child of divorced parents, I completely understood the need to sometimes get away and find satisfaction in the things around me. I created an interactive graph on the data visualization platform Flourish, working with Leo to gather data from the internet about the popularity of variations of flowers. I also went to the farm and took photographs of him for one afternoon, seeing how he worked and why this activity was so gratifying for him.

Paper Animation: [Getting a Bad Rap](#)

After my friend Amalia and I watched the grammys, we were struck with how many ‘firsts’ had happened. The music industry has a large sector of Black creatives, but very few of them are equally expressed in award ceremonies. We decided to write an extensive article looking into *why* this has prevailed even today. I made a paper animation to go along with the online version of the article.

Even though this video is only 25 seconds, it took over 30 hours of planning and drawing and editing. In the end, it was so satisfying to see an organic piece of work that had my handwriting and my art come to life. The video features archival videos of Black music icons such as Miles Davis, Tupac Shakur, and Lauryn Hill. I first edited together a video, and then printed out each frame (there are almost 150), and added details to the paper. I chose the song “Jazz (We’ve Got)” by A Tribe Called Quest because the lyrics say “trails, we blaze / don’t deserve the gong / don’t deserve the praise” which relates to the experience of Black artists in the music industry.

When Black artists are recognized, there is a lot of sentiment that they didn’t deserve it, even when they worked just as hard as their White counterparts. Interviewing Daphne Brooks, a professor specializing in Black music in history at Yale University, opened my eyes about how stark the disparities are in the music industry. It is so crucial as journalists, especially student journalists, to expose inequalities like this to our readers. The long held stereotypes about Hip Hop and Rap being “unprofessional” or “lazy” brings down the Black community as a whole. In fact, these art forms are crucial pillars of our culture today.

Podcast Episode: [Overwhelmed: Climate Anxiety](#)

Around the new year, I always feel extra anxious. This episode was about that anxiety, especially about what is currently happening to our planet. It was also around election season, which is a difficult time for a number of reasons. By the end, we come to the conclusion that social media and

the internet is blowing a lot of things out of proportion. As teenagers, it is our role to stay informed, but also to remember not to constantly worry about things out of our control.

I edited and recorded the episode with my friend Alice, and created the cover for the episode. This series will continue to grow and new episodes will be released in the coming months, which I will coordinate and organize within our publication.

Website Header Graphic: [At the Top of the Page](#)

Now I am an Editor-in-Chief, but Last year, I was our Multimedia Manager. I ran parts of the website and was constantly coming up with ideas on how to improve the interface of the site. I decided to draw my own animation of the header. Like my paper animation, this project was time consuming and laborious. I think the colorful animation adds a lot to the structure of our site, and helps show off all the hard work that we have all done this past school year. I also coded it using HTML and CSS to make the animation stop after one play-through, utilizing my skills from computer science classes to improve the website.

Personal Statement:

My love for videos began in 3rd grade, when I had just moved to a new school. I had nothing to connect with the kids in my class. I would spend breaks drawing indoors or reading, afraid to make friends. While I was reading in the courtyard, a boy asked me if I wanted to take a class iPad and film a video. This video evolved— soon enough, the entire class was helping us film a movie. I would spend my lunch periods filming, writing scenes, setting up greenscreen, and editing. It was clear, even at that age, that I had a passion for videography and telling stories.

When I started journalism, I considered joining Broadcast, but as an avid writer, I wanted to be able to write too. When I joined my publication as a sophomore, I immediately dove into long interviews and quote transitions. Still, I felt like something was missing. That fall, I tried my hand at making a simple video of fall outfits. That experience made me realize that the part of journalism I loved was not only writing, but telling stories and that the best way to tell a full story is sometimes a video, or audio, or even, a timeline.

The spring of my sophomore year, I wanted to run for a leadership position. Traditionally, we have positions such as Managing Editor and Creative Director that are geared for the print publications. After considering my options, I decided that I wanted to spend the next year improving our online presence. So I told the Editors-in-Chief that I was interested in a new position: a Multimedia Manager. They decided that this was a strong idea, we needed this position. So I ran for it and was chosen. Initially it was completely different than I had expected, I spent hours on the website page fixing every story's multimedia element to be cohesive and clear, and I ended up with less time for my own stories and work. But in the end, this position was fulfilling because of the strength and dimension that it gave to the stories. For example, when we wrote a story about horror films, the group decided to record soundbites of the movies and quiz our readers. It was experiences like this that made being Multimedia Manager one of the highlights of my junior year.

My skills as a multimedia journalist also turned out to serve me in life. My Nani survived the 1947 Partition, which was the largest mass migration in recorded history. All of our family records were destroyed in this event, and her stories were the only way we had to remember it. The fall of my junior year, she fell sick with cancer. I went to her in the hospital and recorded her stories on my phone. I asked her about her childhood fleeing from Partition, about college, where she studied English, and her career as a Journalist in Singapore. I realized that hearing her voice recount these was so much more powerful than simply reading a transcript. The articles that I write as a journalist are equally as meaningful. I hope to continue telling stories in their entirety— using all my resources and technology to share them as they were originally intended.