

the comm-unity newsletter

Behind the Scenes of a Photoshoot with Lotus Magazine

by **Caroline Bart**

Lotus magazine has become a well-read publication, not only within the communications department but all of Manhattan College. *Lotus*' mission is for "every person to feel beautiful and have a space to show it off."

Lotus' mission is to make its readers immerse themselves into a platform for self-expression, identity, and authentic representation. With 10 issues under its belt, the magazine continues to push its creative limits — particularly through its photoshoots.

The photos for "Vintage Vortex," which *Lotus* head stylist Mars Ross styled and directed, were taken in her apartment in Manhattan.



Ross styled and directed the "Tea with Turtles" photoshoot, pictured here.

Head stylist Mars Ross, a communication major, described seeing everything from a photoshoot come together as "the best feeling ever." Although these shoots can be stressful, she says it's always a place for the imagination to thrive.

"Once everyone gets there, that's when it gets fun ... [it's] still a little bit stressful," Ross said. "We're doing the makeup, we're doing the nails, we're doing the hair, but then once everyone is ready it's really fun, and once we start shooting, it kind of just becomes like a party and we're playing music and we're just taking pictures ... it's almost like a game of dress up."

Ross has styled multiple shoots, including

“Vintage Vortex” and “Tea with Turtles.” She discussed where she curates most of her pieces and how she approaches finding clothes that will fit her models.

“I used a bunch of secondhand clothes because that’s most of my closet ... I actually went thrifting with a model and had her trying on clothes there to see what worked,” Ross said.

Lotus’ dress up game got brought to life when they hosted their first fashion show during the spring semester. There, they showcased designs styled by MC students. These outfits were modeled by MC students as well. Ross was one of ten stylists who participated in the show, and she had seven models showcase her work.

Not only are the stylists an integral part of any *Lotus* shoot, but the photographers play a huge role as well. “*Lotus* was a space for me to express myself in any way ...



Brian Asare, former photo editor for *Lotus*, took photographs at the *Lotus’* first ever fashion show last spring.

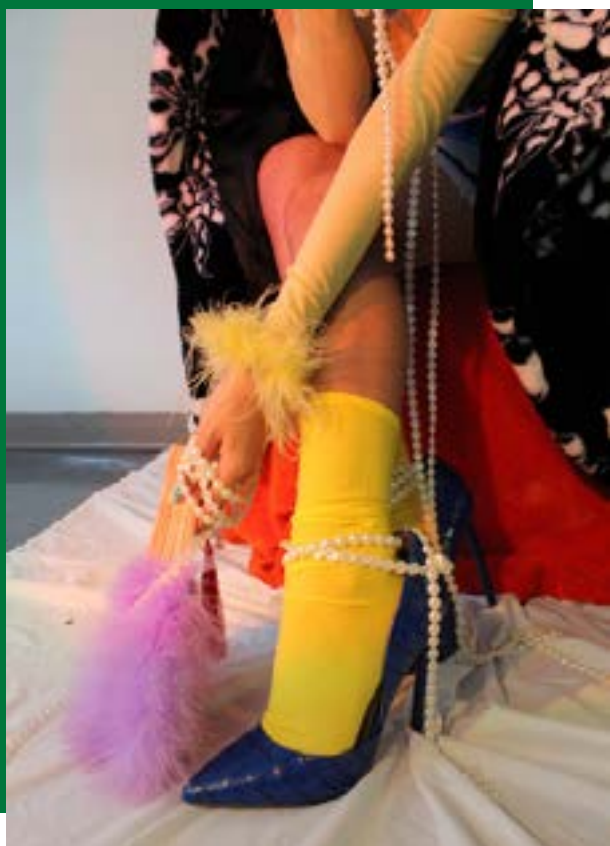
any art form I wanted to use. I really used [*Lotus*] as a medium to showcase what I could do with my camera,” former *Lotus* photographer Brian Asare said. “What *Lotus* has done for me was give me a platform to really express myself”

Liz Dong, the current assistant photography director, shared what it’s like to work for *Lotus* and her favorite aspects of it.

“My favorite part of the *Lotus* shoot is the atmosphere. The vibes are generally so energetic, happy, inspiring and just overall so positive. Everyone who is there at the *Lotus* shoot is there for a reason and it shows through the work that they do and the energy they bring to the room. It is so empowering and inspiring being next to people who are just as equally as passionate about *Lotus*.”

Since one of *Lotus’* main goals is to give artists creative freedom, Dong discussed a favorite shoot of hers.

“I loved being the photographer for the ‘Dreams’ shoot,” she said. “It came together so



Liz Dong, assistant photo editor for *Lotus*, had the opportunity to capture the “Dreams” shoot for this fall’s issue.

nicely and the shoot itself was coordinated so well. It is something that I am genuinely so incredibly proud of and I learned so much in the process. It was my first shoot that I did on my own, which is why I feel so connected to it.”

This is what *Lotus* is all about and the reason it was formed. It is a haven for creativity, art, expression and identity. And as you can see, a really awesome team is making all of that happen — make sure to check out their eleventh issue, “Eclectic”! ★