

The Power of Transformation: How OFF THE CUFF Magazine is Embracing Evolution A CONVERSATION WITH JESSIE YANG

INTRODUCING OFF THE CUFF

Since its inception in 2013, Boston University's student-run magazine, Off The Cuff, has proven to be a one-of-a-kind publication. Fueled by a shared passion for fashion and art, these visionary BU students set out to produce a stunning exhibition of creativity, talent, and innovation. What they built is truly captivating - a thriving community of student artists and leaders who collaborate to break the boundaries of creativity and expression. At the helm of this visionary publication is *Jessie Yang*, a Co-Editor in Chief who plays a crucial role in shaping the magazine's content and direction. Jessie has cultivated a welcoming and inclusive organization where unique concepts can flourish. During our insightful interview, Jessie and I explored the captivating realm of Off The Cuff Magazine, including the excitement surrounding the magazine's latest and most groundbreaking issue, "Metamorphosis." While sharing her distinctive viewpoints, Jessie expands on her involvement with the publication, discussing Off The Cuff's unique culture and the continued growth of the publication.



Jessie started our interview with enthusiasm, demonstrating her commitment to the magazine and describing her current role and experience with Off the Cuff. Fulfilling her role as Editor in Chief, Jessie exudes a love for content, art, and writing that is nothing short of inspiring. This devotion to her craft is what initially drew her to the publication, providing her with a platform where she could not only write but help build a brand that celebrated creatives like her. Her unwavering dedication to Off the Cuff ultimately led her to pursue her leadership position, going above and beyond to engage with her Off The Cuff peers.

As the EIC, Jessie not only oversees the creative directors and attends all the shoots but also serves as the head makeup artist, sharing her expertise and cheering on the creative teams.

"It's exciting to be a jack of all trades and encourage collaboration. However, uplifting other voices is not about tyranny from my end. It's about being a midwife on set and pushing people to do their best,"

Jessie explained, emphasizing the importance of maintaining a positive environment at Off the Cuff. The magazine continues to preach this positive environment through its interpretation of change and growth in its latest issue, "Metamorphosis." Jessie elaborated on the concept and themes that inspired the new issue, opening up about her own time of change,

"Logan (CO-EIC) and I were thinking about graduation, and we wanted to come up with a theme that wasn't clear-cut to everyone. We both like exploring topics that have multiple interpretations. Metamorphosis, beyond the bug and transformation in science, was something that intrigued us as a theme for an issue that empowers growth."

Beyond The Binary

Highlighting the significance of evolution in creation, Jessie sought to challenge any stereotypes or expectations of the magazine. To underscore this message, Off the Cuff opted for a black-and-white photoshoot instead of their typical use of color. Jessie touched on the different thought processes involved in the new issue's stylistic choices sharing, **"In Off The Cuff, we believe there's no good or bad, or binary way to look at things. Analyzing this perspective, we wanted to explore that notion further, looking at different influences. For example, The concept of mythology and its connection to transforming into something unattainable. Lastly, we also turned to the nihilistic novel "Metamorphosis" by Franz Kafka, looking at his interpretation of transformation."** Off the Cuff recognizes that There's beauty in the unknown and in exploring choices and risks we wouldn't normally consider. In this manner, the issue Metamorphosis explores the transformative power of change in both individuals and society as a whole. In addition, The cover image perfectly captures the beauty and power of transformation, inspiring readers to embrace change in their own lives. Jessie elaborated on the importance of embracing change, even if it can be scary at times, stating, **"Moments when you want to get out of yourself and explore that concept. We really wanted to highlight that transitional period and how beautiful it can be."**

A Decade of Growth and Empowerment

With its commitment to artistic freedom and growth, it's no wonder that Off The Cuff has thrived for a decade, celebrating its 10th anniversary. Throughout our conversation, it was clear that the magazine's focus on inclusivity and collaboration is a core part of its identity. **"It's definitely a privilege to practice art,"** Jessie observed. As EIC, Jessie wants to make sure that everyone feels welcome to apply to Off The Cuff; **"There are no specific requirements to join our team,"** Jessie explained. This same mentality is taught to Off The Cut members, as Jessie looks to motivate the publication's creative minds to believe in their potential. Off The Cuff encourages experimentation and exploration without fear of making mistakes. The magazine includes content that empowers non-binary fashion, exploring those influences. The Models are encouraged to try on clothes outside of their usual style, discovering their creative expression in stylistic choices they would have never tried before. Similarly, boundaries are still strict and respected, with the comfort of the models being top priority. **With clothing, the model's comfortability is of utmost importance. Our models are very experimental and want to try everything, there's never any wrong answer. It's all based on community,** Jessie noted. She firmly believes that fashion should be a platform for diversity and self-expression that feels genuine and not forced. Promoting self-expression that transcends borders and cultures, Off the Cuff preaches a mission statement that honors inclusion and sustainability. Recognizing that The fashion design community at BU is smaller than most, Jessie notes the factors that constrict their reach as a magazine: **"Resources to feature small designers are really scarce, but this past semester with our mission to destabilize gender expression fashion, we were able to include diverse perspectives in our work. However, the implementation of male stylists is an area we still seek to grow. It's those limitations that we feel we need to bridge the gap with more diverse stylists, including all gender spectrums."**

Utilizing their resources at hand, Off The Cuff finds innovative ways to create content that feels unique while remaining sustainable. Rather than purchasing items to use on sites like amazon or shein, the magazine strays away from big corporations. Jessie, along with Of The Cuff's executive team, encourages their members to find different avenues in the process of creating their vision. Jessie illustrates some of the following practices remarking, **"People buy vintage rings from cambridge. If a shirt doesn't fit we tie it in a different manner, turning it into a backless top"**. The magazine commemorates this culture of innovation even in their website's design, providing translation of their content in spanish for their readers. This is imperative to Boston University, as Off The Cuff's inclusion of spanish caters to the immense international population present at the university, many being Latino.



JESSIE YANG'S ADVICE FOR CREATIVES AT OTC AND BEYOND

Reflecting on her time at Off The Cuff and her advice to other creatives, Jessie urges her peers and artists in the making to make their voices heard, no matter where they go. Having recently graduated from BU with a major in screenwriting and a minor in sociology, Jessie has been in situations where she found herself having to push forward her own vision or work. Having worked for big and accomplished platforms like Warner Brothers, Jessie had to take advantage of her opportunities, allowing her writing to shine and learning new skills for her talents to grow. Even at OTC, while Jessie has been able to be in the spotlight, she understands how a project with eighty or ninety contributors can seem intimidating to members, leaving them the following advice: **"Be happy, be helpful. Stay late. In a sea of people, I demonstrated passion and perseverance by going above and beyond what was asked of me; that's what made me stand out. There's no right way to see fashion. Be confident in yourself and your abilities. It's a part of maturing and growing up where you realize if you don't have your own back, no one else does. Be willing to make mistakes and get critiqued, and just ultimately be willing to learn."**

EXPANDING CREATIVITY: OFF THE CUFF MAGAZINE'S FUTURE PLANS

Looking at Off The Cuff's future and the release of Metamorphosis, the magazine is thrilled to keep its creative flow thriving, creating additional opportunities for publication. One of these additions includes a mini booklet featuring behind-the-scenes content printed on paper for Off The Cuff members to enjoy. Excited about Off The Cuff's future, Jessie explained some of the projects to come, **"We have interviews with the lighting directors who worked on the porcelain shoot, as well as the BTS from the photography on the Stations of Grief shoot, included. And one of our members, Poppy, has initiated a new project that we can't wait to showcase, including the addition of behind-the-scenes content and the expansion of our online presence. As part of this initiative, we're working with recording studios to create unique, immersive experiences that combine realism and surrealism."**



A Legacy of Leadership:

Jessie Yang's Impact on Off The Cuff Magazine

An accomplished writer, a remarkable Editor in Chief, a dedicated BU student, and an exemplary human being, Jessie Yang is a refreshing and delightful artist who has left a true legacy at Off The Cuff. Our thirty-minute interview felt easy and engaging, as Jessie even took time to celebrate the interview for the creative collaboration it is, showcasing the fashion and creative world as a welcoming and supportive place for all. Jessie is a remarkable representation of a leader that unites, as she holds to heart the values and missions Off The Cuff promotes. There is no doubt this magazine will continue to make great strides, with both Jessie's future and Off The Cuff's growth looking to be promising and remarkable. As the magazine moves forward with its transition in the new issue Metamorphosis, Jessie's future work, along with the publication's innovative content, are projects to be celebrated and shared. Redefining evolution, I urge readers to immerse themselves in Off The Cuff's a new issue and future work, challenging themselves to reflect on their own times of transition and find beauty and inspiration in moments of change.

To fully immerse yourself in Off The Cuff's innovative content, be sure to check out their [website](#) and follow OTC on [Instagram](#).