

ART AS FASHION

BY ISABELLA TAYLOR

First, a little introduction: For nearly 7 years, I had the privilege of serving as the editor of a unique children's literary magazine called *Creative Kids*, which features the best work by writers, artists, and other talented kids across the country. With hundreds of submissions coming in every couple of months, trust me, I saw work that would knock most adults' socks off. So, when Kryss Goree and the *TEMPO* editorial board (of which I am a part) discussed featuring student work at a recent meeting, I began brandishing my pen like Hermione Granger waving her arm in class. "Me, me! I know the perfect student for this!" I wanted to shout (don't worry, I kept my enthusiasm in check).

And here she is: Isabella Taylor, a 13-year-old from Austin who not only has a lovely way with poetry, but has recently turned her phenomenal artwork (see her self-portrait from 2011) into her own fashion line that's been featured on *The Huffington Post*, *Justine* magazine, and the TODAY show. Oh, and did I mention, she's currently a college student?

Teachers and parents, I know I'm not alone in noticing the amazing work of young Texans. We really do have some of the best and the brightest right here at home! The *TEMPO* board wants to see the fantastic things your gifted students are doing, too! Please submit your students' outstanding work (and get creative—artwork, poems, stories, essays, or personal narratives like Isabella's are all welcome!) to me at lacy@cmptn.org. I'd love to help feature your students in a future issue of *TEMPO*!



“Do what you love to do.” That is how my adventure into art and fashion first began.

I began to paint at a very early age, and it was through my passion for painting and fashion that my current fashion line has become a business. Four years ago, I was exploring mixed media and wanted to learn how to sew, so I signed up for a sewing camp at the Austin School of Fashion Design.

I fell in love with sewing and designing and quickly began sewing clothes for myself. Designing clothing was another creative outlet for me that was tied to my art sometimes consciously and other times very subconsciously. A few years ago, I translated one of my paintings “Winter Roses” into a couture dress that I patterned, designed, and sewed together. I took the movement of the painting and the floral design as well as the color palette and “made” it into a dress. (*Editor’s Note:* “Winter Roses” won a Gold Key in Fashion from the Scholastic Arts Awards in 2013.)

I have always said “if art had legs, it would be fashion,” and I really believe that holds true for me. I have been turning my paintings into fabric. I can see my paintings as tops or pants and sometimes I might be working with a fabric that influences my color palette for a painting. The relationship moves pretty fluidly back and forth. I have moved on from sewing clothes for myself to making clothing collections with the support of my Mom and Dad. I have been learning a great deal about what it takes to run a fashion line. There are many moving pieces that need to be orchestrated in order to make it happen from my initial design sketches to fabric selections, sample making, and production to the hanger. It has definitely taken a lot of “blood, sweat, and glitter” to get to where I am now but I absolutely love what I am doing!

Lacy Compton is a member of the *TEMPO* Editorial Board. She has been an editor and promotions coordinator at Prufrock Press since 2005 and an instructor with Johns Hopkins University’s Center for Talented Youth since 2009, where she teaches online literature courses to gifted fourth and fifth graders. Lacy holds a bachelor’s degree in journalism from Baylor University and a master’s degree in English from Texas State University.



Thirteen year-old Isabella Taylor turns her artwork into fashion design.

