

CAROLINA MUSE

An Interview with Madison Foster

editor-in-chief of Carolina Muse



Madison Foster has been passionate about the arts in their full scope since she was little. Growing up in Greenville, SC, she could always be found with her face in a book or a guitar strapped over her shoulder. While attending Elon University in North Carolina, she grew her writing & design skills as an English literature major with minors in communications & multimedia authoring. Post-grad, Madison's love for publishing and the arts led her to bring Carolina Muse Literary & Arts Magazine to life in 2020. The multimedia arts magazine provides a platform for artists from all of the creative arts to share their message.

Jenna Duxbury, newsletter writer (JD): You launched Carolina Muse in the middle of 2020, at a time when the world was in lockdown and life as we knew it had been totally disrupted. What inspired you to choose that moment, and where did you find the courage to take that step?

Madison Foster (MF): I remember sitting with Stephanie, a close friend who used to work as the magazine's video editor, and talking about my dreams. She asked me, "Where do you see yourself in five years?" I knew I wanted to work in publishing and to be a vital part of leading a literary magazine, but it seemed like a distant vision at the time. I kept asking myself, "Who am I to be this young person starting a magazine?" But Stephanie really pushed me to take that first step and believe that I could do it. At the same time, I was inspired by the wave of people using their quarantine time to launch side hustles and creative projects. For me, it wasn't just about filling time; it was about following passions I'd carried for years: design, writing, the arts, and building community. Once I decided to start, I just figured out what I needed to do, piece by piece, to make it happen. I designed the logo, built the first website, and on September 16th, 2020, we went live with our first open call for submissions.

JD: From the beginning, you envisioned Carolina Muse as more than a traditional literary journal. What sets it apart, and how do you bring that vision to life?

MF: A lot of the magazines I worked with in college focused on two-dimensional art with stories, poetry, and visual art. I loved that work, but I also wanted to create space for all the art forms that had shaped me, from music to dance to multimedia work. Carolina Muse grew out of that impulse: to design something immersive, almost like walking through a museum where art, text, and performance are all in conversation. Piece-pairing has become one of my favorite parts of the design process, which is the process of choosing which art pieces will be placed near each other and in sequence throughout each issue. It hasn't always been easy, especially figuring out the technology for hosting multimedia pieces, but the persistence has paid off. There really isn't another magazine quite like this one.

JD: Carolina Muse has evolved a lot since that first open call in 2020. What moments stand out to you as milestones in that growth?

MF: In the early days, a lot of our contributors were Elon students, people from my own circle. Since then, the magazine has really taken on a life of its own. Each redesign, each issue, each new editor joining has shaped what we've become. But I think some of the most powerful moments have been when we step outside the digital space and connect in person. Events like our booth at the Greenville Center for Creative Arts, our recent gallery showing and juried visual art competition, and our annual [Arts Jam event coming up on October 11th](#) remind me why this work matters because you can see, hear, and feel the impact of art in real time. Those are the moments when the magazine doesn't just exist on a screen or a page; it's a whole experience that we get to create as a community.

**Join us for Arts Jam on Saturday, October 11th
from 1pm-4pm at Goldie's in Charlotte, NC!
Tickets are \$15.**

See more details on the event page:

<https://www.carolina-muse.com/carolina-muse-arts-jam>

