

Local Designer, UT Alum Runs Captivating Boutique

By [utorange](#), Oct. 13, 2014

Story by Maddy Hill

Photos by Dahlia Dandashi

At Csilla Somogyi, racks of vibrant, high-quality and handmade pieces adorn the chic interior. Shelves of T-shirts and jewelry made by local artisans line the sides of the shop. High-end dresses decorate the store. Located in the heart of Austin on Congress Street and 5th Street, the eccentric feel of Somogyi's boutique captivates customers of all styles as soon as they walk through the shop's tall wooden doors.

At the age of 15 the store's founder, Csilla Somogyi, began designing accessories and clothing. She was fascinated by the idea of working with fabrics and used her paychecks from her first job at a boutique to buy supplies to make dresses. Somogyi spiced up her otherwise drab private school wardrobe by making one dress a day in her spare time after school. Csilla Somogyi's workshop in the back of her store is filled with bold fabric and spools of thread. Following her dad's request to get a degree before going to become a designer, Somogyi went to the University of Texas to get a Bachelor's of Science in interior design. After graduation, she completed a one-year program at The Fashion Institute of Technology in New York City. Somogyi then worked for six years before starting her own clothing line in 2007. With the support of her family and friends, she was able to develop a brand that became well known in New York City, Los Angeles and now Austin. A wall of t-shirts, accessories and random objects that add to Csilla Somogyi's unique interior flair.

Somogyi did not gain this success overnight. She started out working for Liz Claiborne and Macy's before she began developing her own line and having shows in her own apartment. "It took a lot of support from friends," Somogyi says. "First thing, you sell to family and keep your overhead low, and you do it all yourself. I didn't need to pay people, and I had people doing photography for me as a favor."

After backpacking in Southeast Asia for three months, Somogyi returned home and found that her heart was no longer tied to New York City. Eventually Somogyi moved to Austin and opened Csilla Somogyi on Congress Street.

To distinguish herself from other local designers, Somogyi offers on-site tailoring and personal styling to suit the needs of her customers. For Hazel Alterman, a long-time customer and friend, this amenity comes in handy. "I'm short and petite, and don't always get to wear all of these cool dresses," Alterman says. "She will make the clothes fit your body. She will tailor them and have them ready the next day, so it fits perfectly, free of charge."

Simple jewelry crafted by local artists on display at Csilla Somogyi. For Somogyi, success has two ingredients: time and dedication. Whether it's on the couch at home or at the store with interns, Somogyi spends hours brainstorming ideas and stitching pieces. Though the work is not easy, Somogyi acknowledges that perseverance is crucial to keeping any business alive. "If you are inspired to do something, just do it," she says. "Whatever you promise, whatever you say, stick with it."

Categories: [Style](#)

Tagged: [ATX style](#), [Csilla Somogyi](#), [dahlia dandashi](#), [Maddy Hill](#), [style](#)

[Welcome to the Show: The Best Small Venues in Austin](#)

['Yes Means Yes' Law Redefines Sexual Assault on Campus](#)