

# Tom Berend

Class of 1989

Tom Berend graduated from WHS in 1989 and lives in Portland, Oregon, where he is now a footwear designer and owner/creative director of Kik Laboratory.

At WHS, Berend excelled in 2-D work and enjoyed all aspects of design, according to retired Art Dept. member Lisa Wiles, who nominated Berend to be inducted into the Fine Arts Hall of Fame.

After graduation, Berend was accepted into the Art Institute of Pittsburgh Industrial Design Program and then went to the University of Cincinnati for five years for their Industrial Design Program, according to Wiles.

Berend was hired to work for Nike on shoe designs. He was able to work with pro-athletes, and he designed the 'Jordan 23' shoe. In 2001, Berend was, "promoted to Nike's advanced innovation group, Innovation Kitchen,... where he worked for the next 12 years," Wiles said.

Berend said arts should be included in education programs as they provide so much to students and to our lives.

"I believe self-expression, in every form, is tantamount to establishing perspectives on the world we live in. Ultimately, it is about communication at the highest level... Visual arts, performing arts, music, literature: these are the building blocks of diverse thinking, problem solving and the mature tools needed to openly express the solutions to the world's challenges," Berend said.

In 2015, Berend formed his own design firm, KIKLaboratory, "where creativity and experimentation are encouraged-a safe space where it's okay to fail," Wiles said.

— Gina Van Lieu, *student interviewer*



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