

2012/13 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Young Photographers Alliance/B + H Award

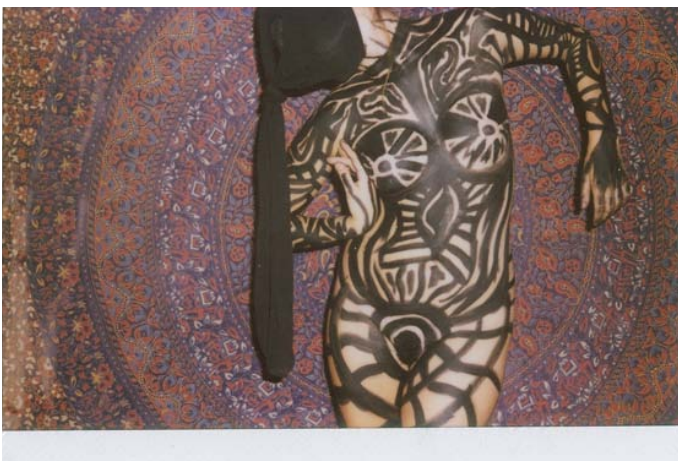


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Throughout my life I have found that my surroundings have consistently nurtured for artistic expression—my mother an eccentric pianist, my father a chef. My grandparents, too, left a tremendous impact on the being I am today. They inspired me to no end. My grandfather, a goofy blue collar garage sale goer and antique refurbisher, would turn the forgotten into masterpieces of history. Then there was my grandmother, who is a self-proclaimed interior designer whose homes are always immaculate and homemade. My other grandmother, an immigrant seamstress from the Philippines, is also a source of inspiration. She would—and still does to this day—sit at the kitchen table crocheting, knitting and sewing whatever you could think of and donating it to charity. She is soft-spoken yet so inspirational with the sad story that is her life, living through poverty into the American Dream.

Growing up in a household of young and possibly inept parents, as they too tried to find themselves, living in states from Illinois to Delaware, I grew accustomed to different lifestyles and subcultures and had a deep understanding of how the world treats people at a very young age. I realized that all of the trailer parks I went to conditioned me to be accepting of people from every background, wealthy or



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impoverished. I became strong and was able to keep a positive mindset when my father was sentenced to ten years in prison after a horrible relapse. That moment also defined me and pushed me to strive for my dreams because life is forever unpredictable and should be cherished and made the most of.



After everything I have been through I found that the most I can do to make an impact on the world is to be a teacher. I am a member of Gay Straight Alliance, and Students Against Destructive Decisions, where I teach the youth about acceptance—something the world has too little of. But in the future I want to be informative to the public, not a classroom teacher. I want to spread what is happening around us, because we are sometimes too self-absorbed and ignorant to notice things outside of our microscopic bubble. Through my photography I can document all the miracles, obscurities, details and larger pictures. I have such a drive to help people who I do not even know. I am hoping to get involved with the Peace Corps and other organizations that help people in developing nations. I am planning on spreading the images I take to the people of my same background in the United States. Hopefully with these images I will inspire someone, even if just one person, to pursue their dreams. I am willing to be in the center of the chaos, in the midst of the madness and I will do whatever it takes to get me to that point.

