

2008/09 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Lippincott Award

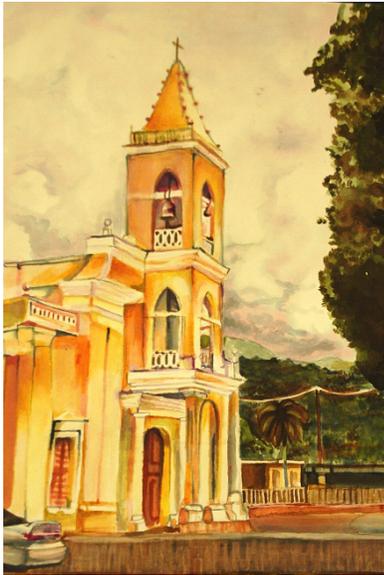


MARYLIA PLACERES

Graphic design

Freshman

School of the Art Institute of Chicago



I was a small child living deep in the town of Naguabo, Puerto Rico. I always had a knack for making boxes into Barbie dream houses, and drawing pictures of what I wanted to be. Back then, while all my friends wanted to be doctors and nurses, I wanted to be a cat with magic crayons. I was a very happy child; I walked the plaza alone, becoming close friends with all the bums. They would walk past our balcony and bring me “Maria” cookies purchased with a share of their small fortune they collected in their cups. My mom didn’t mind, she was too wound up in her problems; my father was in the United States, paying to help us live well, while she sat at home writing letters.

When I was in the second grade, my dad decided it was time for us to join him. My sister and I were thrilled! Yet my mom sat crying hysterically on the plane, and from then on, she did not stop for many years to come. As the years went by, the relationship between my dad and my mother grew more and more distant until I was 14. We went on vacation to Puerto Rico and Mom never came back or called. A year later my dad filed for a divorce.



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When we moved, I turned into a child that didn't come out of her room. Nobody wanted to be friends with me. I was the only foreign person in my school. I sat in my room and played "Pretend." I drew pictures of a star coming to get me from my home and taking me to skate on Jupiter's rings, far, far away from all my harsh realities.

As my art skills developed, I became more confident, and I started working extremely hard in my studies. My quest for perfection in art eventually inspired me to be limitless. I started talking to people, joining activities and using my voice. I had realized that my culture had exposed me to ideas other didn't have, and I was more than happy to share my knowledge.

In the present, my art is influenced by things I've been through and experienced—things I do and things I want to be. Through art I can escape from the things going on around me and feel more at peace with myself. I want to show people that there is more to the world than its outward appearance. My creative goal is to send a sense of happiness and joy to viewers through my artwork. I plan to be a graphic artist. I would love to work with and inspire children of the Hispanic-American community that have to not only go through the difficulty of not being in their native country, but also harsh family issues that are bestowed upon them from cultural change and other stresses. I found something that overcame my stresses: art. I am now the president of my graduating class and vice president of the National Honor Society; I was voted homecoming queen and I rank in the top 15 in my graduating class. Every Saturday morning, while most sleep in, I am at the Columbus College of Art and Design taking Saturday morning art classes (as I have been for five years). I now plan to further my education at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago, with a major in visual communication. I hope someday I can inspire others and make a difference.

