

2012/13 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Young Photographers Alliance/Alamy Award



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Photography
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I am weird. I am an Artist. Am I an artist because I'm weird, or am I weird because I'm an artist? I'm not sure. I do know that I create art to express myself where words fail. I like to create unique, different, bold, crisp, unpredictable work that illustrates peculiar ideas, expressions, emotions and beliefs I experience. I hope that other people—when they see my work—are as captivated as I am. I hope they understand the many expressions that I illustrate in photography.

I have not had an easy road. Both of my parents had drug and alcohol problems as does most of my family. When I was two, my parents reverted to their drug and alcohol ways. My sister and I were victims of neglect and no longer safe; Child Protective Services removed us from their care. Fortunately, my Aunt Kathy adopted me and my sister was adopted by my Aunt Pam. After three years, my dad was clean and sober and we returned to his custody. He truly reformed; he found powerful religious faith and remarried. I am still in contact with my mother and we see each other at least once a month. This whole situation was very painful and still can be.



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Photography



I am also an open member of the gay community. Despite the difficulty of being openly gay, it was so liberating. I no longer worry about what people think of me. It might be great that I have made this change within myself, but I also believe that I should make a positive change in others. I do illustrate this with my involvement in the community, involvement in my church choir and my school's Gay-Straight Alliance. Through our efforts, we promote a better social environment. As a future creator, I will do all I can to support the gay community.

I feel I have the greatest skill and passion for photography. Because of photography, I see life in a different way. Life is a canvas and I express myself accordingly. Before I shoot, I usually come up with an idea. It might be simple but where I take it can be complex. It might come from an object I find, like a fish-tank; a photo technique I observe or want to try, like a camera-obscura, or simply when I see an artistic opportunity like a good location.

I'm currently looking at my strange, captivating past works and seeking ideas to invent even more interesting and bizarre concepts. I desire to evolve as an artist by pushing more boundaries, leaving viewers in a state of wonder.

