

Senior Thesis

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As a photographer, I've taken a lot of photographs. Some people may call me "trigger happy" which can be used in positive and negative light. From the day I first held a camera, I've wanted to capture every moment that I experience. I remember begging my mom when I was nine to "PLEASE buy me more film!" and begging her to take me to Target to get it developed. I think at first, my parents thought this was a phase, see, I was always the kid that wanted to do or at least try everything, I tried all kinds of sports, traditional like soccer and swimming, to non traditional like sailing and rock climbing. I loved almost every kind of schooling, math, English, science. From one week to the next it was "MOM, MOM listen... I wanna be a marine biologist... well actually I'm gonna be a professional parasailier.... Is bug collecting a job profession?" Wanting to do everything is an amazing trait to have; wanting to be good at everything is most definitely not. Every time I felt like I did something, I failed at it, which of course made me so angry as a young adolescent. As I grew older, into my skin a bit more, photography didn't go away, I went through more phases, the rock star phase, potters phase, wanting to teach kindergarten phase, but photography always hung around in the background. I especially loved art, I found art at a fairly young age and was decent as pretty much all of it. My favorites were sewing and painting, but I would really be up for doing college and anything mixed media.

As time went by I fell in love with art as a whole the creation of it, the expression the artist has and how it can be so easily portrayed through art. After trying what seemed like every medium, they all didn't feel 'right' I would talk to my friends who were in high school at the time about what they were passionate about. They were all so driven to do one thing, so strong willed to be the best, and they knew. They knew and I would look at them with envy. I didn't know. I never felt like I knew and I didn't feel like I was in a place

to ever know. This saddened me deeply and I went into a phase in my life where thinking back on it now seems like a black hole. I kept trying to force myself to fall in love with something, anything, to be passionate like my peers about what they wanted to do. People would tell me, “well honey, you’re a jack of all trades but a master at none.” What the hell. Seriously? That’s all you’ve got to tell me? I wanted to be a master of all of them god damn it! Being told that only made me feel worse, because if it wasn’t already eating me up inside, it consumed me even more to know that other people could see it.

I spent my whole life trying to find something that clicked and when it did, it clicked hard. I had always spent time with my camera, I asked for a DSLR camera for Christmas one year and became trigger happy again. Having my camera was helpful because it helped me save memories that I

would’ve probably forgotten if I didn’t capture them. I continued to search for my passion and it wasn’t until one summer day, I was lying with my best friend in the grass and we were talking about who knows



what. The sky was a pastel blue with cotton swipes across it, it was hot but bearable and iced tea kept us cool. As we sat there, talking, she looked over at me, I grabbed my camera and watched her look at me through a piece of glass, she connected with me in a way that I had never felt before, it was a moment that I never wanted to give up, a moment I will hold onto forever.

Because of that image, I haven't stopped. I don't want to, I can't. I won't. Photography is like an addiction, I thrive off of connection and the model is my enabler. I want to capture everything, the breeze as it catches the models hair, the cold rain drops that land on summer scorched skin, the lady bug that gets its path blown on to soft fuzzy arm hairs; these are the moments I can't seem to break out of my mind. I want to focus on the little things, the dreamlike qualities of life.

Photography drove me so much that I decided to go to school for it. Taking my first photo class, I didn't fully understand what I signed up for. Peers that went to high school for photography, knew about film, and could set their ISO with their eyes closed surrounded me. I on the other hand had just been shooting automatic with my crappy DSLR I got from my parents for Christmas three years previous. I wanted to quit. I didn't know as much as they did. I didn't feel good enough; I was taken back to when I felt like a jack of all trades. I wanted to drop out of college and be a beauty school dropout (yes, one



more thing I wanted to do.) I had already gotten scholarship and paid my tuition and my parents wouldn't let me drop out, but told me I could switch majors. I looked into almost everything else, and because it was so late in

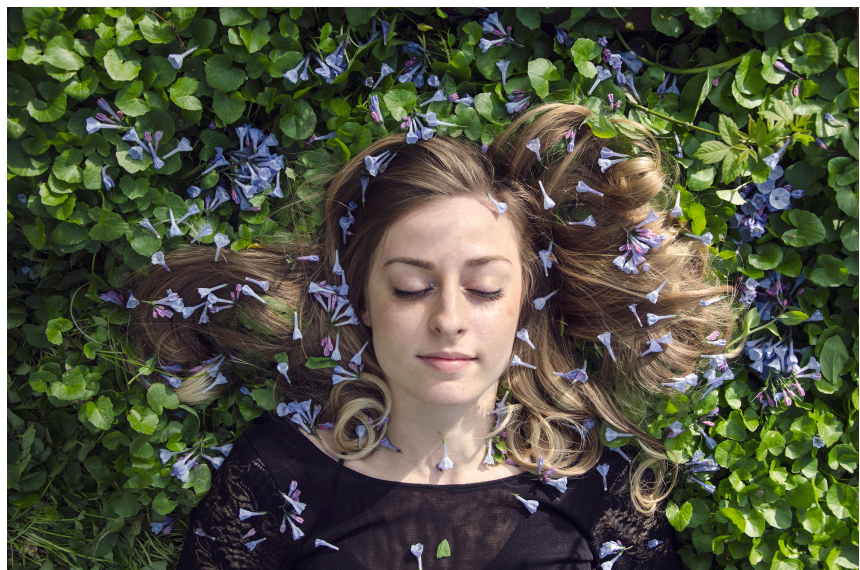
the semester, nothing. I was forced to stay in the class, and I began to fall in love with photography on a technical level versus a conceptual level. I learned how to bounce light, control it, how to pose models, how to talk to them and make them feel beautiful and

comfortable around me. Each facet of photography felt like a flower that had never ending petals. My work progressed, I got better and better, my work started to have a aesthetic that I fell in love with. I would create these scenes that were magical and dreamlike, these all can be related back to that one summer day. Because that's what I longed for, that heart filled connection.

I came to Towson with dreams, I mean that literally and conceptually. I wanted to focus on dreaming and how it can be taken apart as a deconstructed dream. I worked with different people, places, teachers, and tried what seemed like a million mediums while at Towson. Towson is wonderful in that everyone is so open to letting students dip their feet in whatever medium they choose.

I grew more at Towson then I ever have in my life.

I think it was a solid mix of being in my early 20s and Towson itself. I learned the most from the people



here. My teachers and classmates challenged me to do better, and to not give up.

My whole career at Towson has been about dreaming, and ripping apart those dreams to see what they're really made of. I've had this idea in my head since the beginning of the semester and I knew that I needed to make it a reality for my senior show. My concept was a dream versus a deconstructed dream. I wanted to make two images that conveyed that, the top would be a conceptual version of a dream, and the bottom would be the



deconstructed version. In all of my photography, the point is for you to be there with the model, I want the viewer to feel the models mood. So as you can imagine, how the heck was I going to make this work? I thought the same thing, over and over

actually. My first step was to get the image. I used myself as the model, because I knew exactly what I wanted, I had it drawn out in my head (also getting anyone to lay in 42 degree water was difficult as well. I made sure my camera settings were exactly how I wanted, I posed Scott who also goes to Towson, and he pushed the button. This wouldn't have happened without him and for that I am very grateful. After I got the image



exactly how I wanted, it was time to put my mixed media skills to the test. I worked on the frames, which were just worn pink wood. I first sprayed them green, thinking about it matching the green in the image, I did that and quickly realized that I just wasted my time



because the green looked so tacky and DIY feeling. I then tried a dark brown in hopes that that would look better, nope, still looked crafty. I then tried black, but the black paint that I got was glossy and that too looked lame, off to matte black, which still looked glossy. It wasn't

until chalkboard paint caught my eye and I bought some of that and tried it that I really was happy with it. I fitted the images into the back of the frame and sealed them with epoxy so the images wouldn't get ruined. I poured a total of four coats of resin, spreading it to the parts I wanted with a medal wire. I dotted all the water droplets on my skin and waited to do the next coat. I also poured it down the sides, looking like the water was pouring out. I also started molding the fabric on the bottom piece using resin and bowls covered in Vaseline so they wouldn't stick. The top frame was partially covered in moss to tie them both together. This was more of a waiting game then anything, I went through two images of each because I would pour something, glue something, where I didn't want it to go. I finally uncovered my final images and was in awe of how they looked. I hang them myself in the gallery and that in itself is a feeling that is remarkable. I added small touches like a water spill on the floor and drips made of hot glue hanging off it. Because Towson Art Collective is in such a open space, I knew I had to be careful about glare so I choose to not cover them. I think that was the right move because I think glass would've been very distracting in such a bright space.

The images that I'm creating now are at a different level than the ones I was creating when I first started taking photographs. I'm learning really who I am as a person and what

I want to show the world. This past year has been the biggest push in art for me ever. I am so passionate about art and mixed media and I can't wait to see what I'll do next, I feel ready to go into the world with what I learned at Towson. I don't feel



like I can't do anything. I will continue to shoot work and grow as an artist. I've learned that you can't ever stop trying. You'll only get better with practice. I am ready for the world and know it has good things in store for me. Who says a jack of all trades can't be a master at all of them anyway.