

Midnight Geist
@midnightgeist

What is your basic background?

I was born in Jacksonville Florida to a military father and a mother who did her absolute best to keep me on a narrow path to success. We moved to Virginia when I was young and I was raised in Chesapeake, Virginia. I call it The Peak. It's in The Peak where I realized my life wasn't meant to be one of regularity. I was meant to create art on every level.

When did you start your photography?

I was always fascinated by art in its totality and I absorbed every ounce of it that I could as I grew up. I wrote and recorded music as a teen. I practiced illustration as a youth which eventually turned into me being a self-taught graphic designer. This led to me wanting to be involved in every facet of art and I began to have aspirations of starting a clothing line. That led to me learning photography in 2015 so that I could photograph the clothing I created. It soon dawned on me that photography could be a conduit to so much more, and I've used it to become an event director as well as a marketing coordinator.

Did you attend schooling for it?

I attended school in Norfolk, VA (shout out to my second home). I went to Old Dominion University but I didn't study photography, I instead studied another art form, communication. I'm self-taught with the help of other photographers and artists including J.Lewis, Josef Hicks, and Antnyrome.

What opportunities or struggles have you had/faced to get where you are now?

My opportunities have been plentiful but as have my struggles. When I first started my photography journey I put any amount of money I had into gathering more gear and new programs. I traveled to any art show I had the ability to attend, and I was only receiving money through photography so I definitely struggled through college financially. I was doing work that was free for anyone I came across during that time just to get my name out there but I was paying for it when it came to having any money for myself. People took advantage of that and I was often paid with empty promises and that continued for a year or so. During my humble photography beginnings I was traveling often with less than \$50 in my bank account. I remember sleeping in my car in DC. I remember being awake for two days straight shooting and driving in New York City with less than \$100 in my account and then driving straight back home to Virginia and shooting the now historic Charlottesville rally. After struggling for so long I became more of a recluse. I started to only work when money was involved and I lost my passion for a time being. I'm now trying to break out of that mold. I've found my passion again, now it's time for me to find balance.

Where do you see yourself going from here?

I see myself building the media agency that I just began called Midnight Media. I aim to become an artist who can create via any medium I please, whether it be music, painting, photography, fashion, architecture, you name it I want to be able to create it.

What advice or message would you like to give future artists?

I would give artists the same advice I was given. Don't count your losses, in fact, treat your losses as delayed wins. Success is inevitable if you keep at it. Don't let anyone decide what you can achieve, and don't stand in your own way. Once you get the mentality that anything is possible, you start accomplishing things that others could never fathom.

What did you seek to portray with the cover photo?

I would love to be the artist who could give an inner meaning to every piece but honestly, I can't. This piece doesn't symbolize something I went out to portray, instead, this piece represents a story of mine. I took this photo about two hours from Cancun, Mexico when I went on vacation. I was bored with the area I was in and decided to take a bus for about two hours westward. The bus was like \$4 USD and it brought me to these Mayan ruins. The ruins were beautiful and while there I stumbled into a display of Mayan heritage over a running body of water which mesmerized me. I was lucky enough to have my camera with me during the display and honestly, I don't believe I was supposed to but I had snuck it in with my backpack. I say all of this to give a message to other photographers. Bring your camera everywhere. Every picture you take is a story, but it is a story that only you can tell. It doesn't have to always be something that you thought out for hours on end, it's alright sometimes to just live in the moment, and truth be told, that's what photography is about. Creating memories from moments for others to relish.