



Hayden Lenhardt, Grasshopper

Horseheads High School, NY.

Artist Statement

In February of last year, I went through the most traumatic breakup of my life. To spare you all the depressing details, it took me by complete surprise, and I felt like I could never mentally recover. The next semester, the only class I looked forward to at all was my Studio in Art class. After a few fun projects with film photography, I started working on my first digital photography project. I loved it so much that I worked up the courage to ask Mrs. Malloy if I could borrow a camera for the weekend to take with me on a zoo trip. When I got home that evening, I knew this hobby would be something special.

After that trip, I started asking Mrs. Malloy for photography advice and to borrow the camera for more trips. I went from zoo to zoo, getting pictures of as much wildlife as I possibly could. I loved being able to see my progress as a photographer and putting the advice she had given me to good use. When others started complimenting my work, I finally felt proud of my abilities again. Now that I have bought my own camera, I take it with me on any trip I can and take pictures of as much of my natural surroundings as possible. Photographing nature and the animals I love so much puts me at peace. When I returned, I waited excitedly to show Mrs. Malloy what I had found. Digital photography has been the strongest piece of my healing process, and I can't thank her enough for introducing me to it. Because of her, I can finally feel a happiness I haven't in so long.