

MEGAN'S ENCHANTED MIND

By Elsie Bailey & Ashley South

Megan Drane of Firefly Nights Photography, M&L's cover photographer, has never lacked in creativity. She has been a storyteller for as long as she can remember. She would say that she lives in a world of dreams, constantly daydreaming and having movies play out in her head. "I may be slightly insane," she jokes. "Doesn't everyone have stories going all the time in their head like a movie?"

Growing up, Megan always wanted to be a writer. But, her professional career took her down a totally unplanned path and into photography. "I never planned on being a photographer. It just sort of happened." While her career choice may have been accidental, Megan's success certainly is not. Her creative and unique work has garnered international fame, having won several international awards. The two she is most proud of winning are the 2019 International Child Photographer of the Year by Rise International and being

one of only 16 photographers to represent Team USA in the World Photographic Cup. "I'm still shocked that anything I created was put up on a global scale!"

The pictures that have gotten such attention are not the run-of-the-mill portraits. Megan offers commissioned art pieces where she created photographic art that spans outside of reality. "I always joke that I make my own reality." Megan's reality is something magical and better than reality. Just take a look at our cover to see what she created for our first issue. She tells us, "I have always been a storyteller, and now I am a visual storyteller. When I have a consultation about an art piece, I literally have images flickering in my mind. The more the client talks, the more I see, and I will suddenly get the exact image I want to create. When I'm shooting it, I totally see what it will be, which is not at all what it is in that moment." Main & Luxe

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asked Megan to help us bring a new magazine, coming out in the fall, to life. Her vision was born and brought into reality, and we could not be more pleased!

"Being a portrait artist is the creative side of my business as opposed to the regular sessions I do such as families, newborns, and high school seniors. Portraits allow me to be creative and stretch my skills which is the best

part of my job. When I do these creative sessions, it is always a risk – will I succeed in engineering what's in my head? Will the client love it? It is scary and exciting at the same time, but it is the number one thing that keeps me evolving in my work. The day I have nothing else to try or nothing else to learn is the day I guess I'll retire." (We do not see that happening anytime soon.)

Megan says that she knows how lucky she is to be able to make a living doing something she loves in the arts. It is a rarity for which she is grateful. "Having people like my normal photography is great, but that is mostly about skill. Having them like



my commissioned art pieces is so much more personal because they are MY visions which come directly from my heart and soul."

Another reason Megan loves creating visual stories is about the passion – both hers and her clients. "These pieces are a significant investment. They are sold as framed art, so clients need to love them. That means when we are discussing about what we want to do in terms of the story, it has to reflect the client on a deep level. What is at the core of the story we want to tell? Is it about a relationship? Is it wonder? Magic? Love? The goal is to create something meaningful to them but through my

eyes." Commissioned art pieces bring to life the stories in Megan's head for the rest of the world to see.

Ideas are never lacking for Megan as she weaves her visions into her consultations. Most clients come to her just knowing they want something "wow". Megan tells us, "I love characters! Making people into something else is awesome."

Megan tends to love fairytales, magic, and a sense of wonder. "That is the essence of my business name and probably the essence of myself, as well. If I had to pick one word I would want people to feel from my work, it would be **enchanted**."



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