

**Kevin Moore: How did you find photography and at what point did you decide to pursue photography?**

Marissa Orifice: I remember my mom had this point and shoot camera in the early 2010's that we used to bring with us on vacations to Florida, and I always loved playing around with it. I would take pictures of random things like bugs, flowers, what have you. Then in high school, I think I had an assignment for an intro to film photography class where we had to use a digital camera to try and get used to making a composition, and I remember using that same camera to take an "artsy" picture of a single eyeshadow from the brand Kiko. I thought it was so cool how part of the eyeshadow was blurry while the other was in focus. Obviously I had no clue what depth of field even was at that point but that's when I became interested in photography as an art form. It wasn't until I was in my second year of taking the film photography classes at my high school that I decided I wanted to pursue photography. My junior and senior years were spent researching and visiting art schools and liberal arts colleges to help me further decide if I wanted to take the leap and be a photography major or do something more practical like graphic design, but obviously we know how that panned out now.

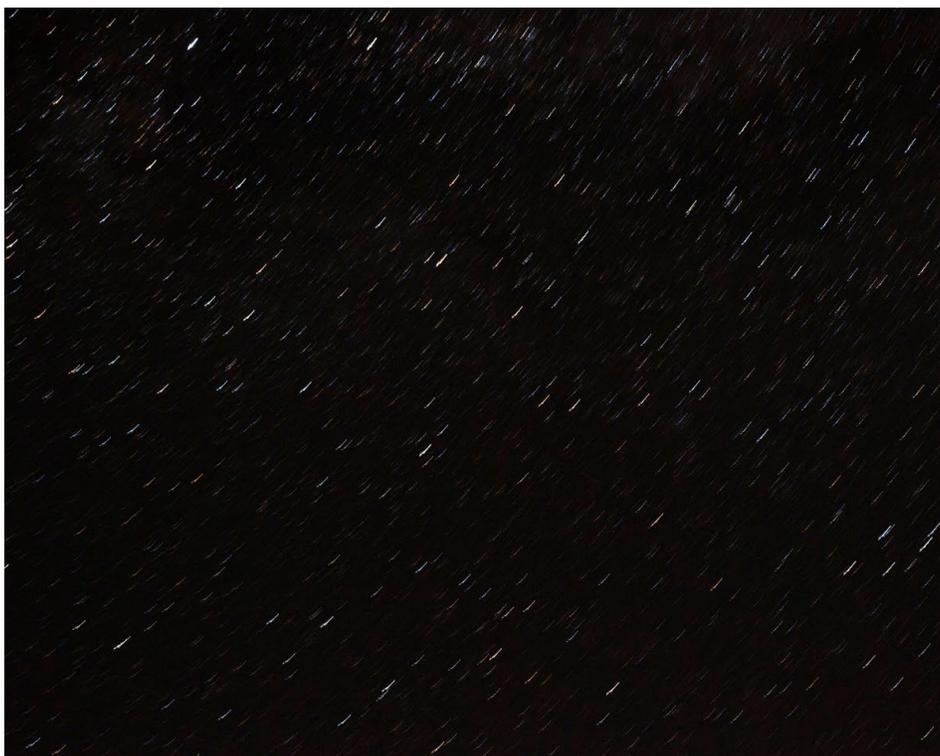


**KM: What drew you to photography instead of other forms of art?**

MO: Photography was a way for me to capture memories and moments in time. I have always been a sentimental person, so much so to the point where I still have letters my friends and ex-boyfriends wrote me back in middle school and high school. It gave me a sort of excuse to always try and capture things to remember them exactly how they happened. I definitely had major "fomo" when I was a kid; I allowed my friends to treat me poorly because I was afraid if I stood up for myself that they would leave me so taking pictures (even if it was with my iPod touch) allowed me to capture those memories.

**KM: Are there any photographers that inspire your work?**

MO: Currently, Todd Hido is the photographer I gain most of my inspiration from. I have seen his images hundreds of times and there isn't a single one that I don't love. The way he captures mood and ambiance with color in his work is so inspiring. It motivates me to try and do the same in my work with the colors I chose to include in my images. In terms of images, in general, that may not necessarily have anything to do with my current work, I am constantly looking at Barbara Bosworth's work from not only *The Heavens* but also *The Meadow*. I think the way she captures light activating a natural landscape is simply perfect. Plus, who doesn't love looking at incredibly beautiful images now and then?





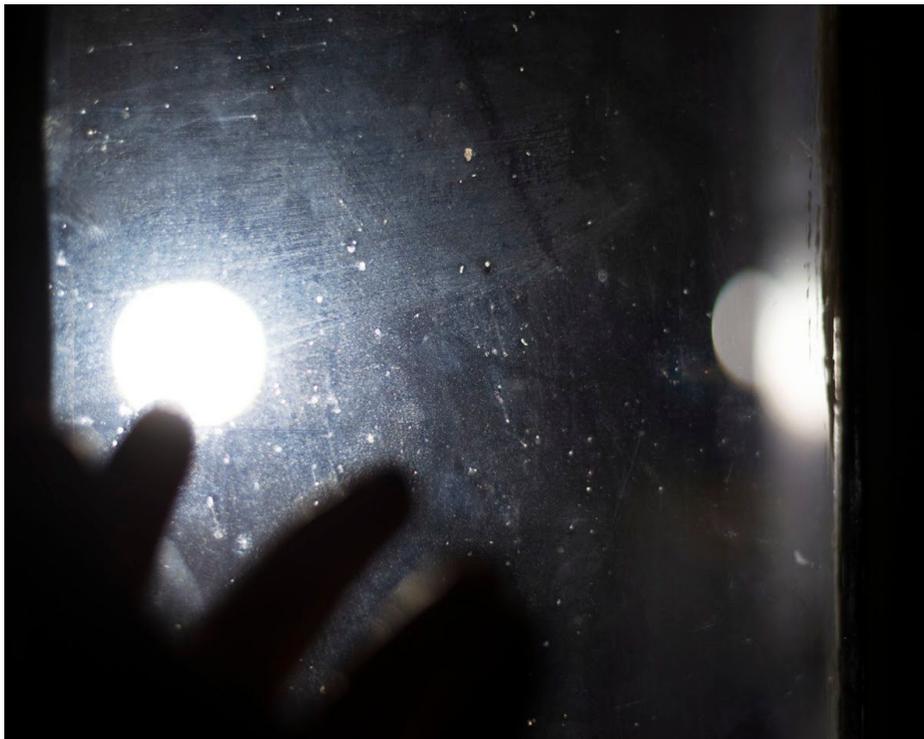
**KM: Are you inspired by any other art forms? What mediums and why?**

MO: I would say I'm really inspired by illustration work. A lot of the illustrations I see are from my peers at MassArt on their social media pages. I find that the way illustrators use color is in a similar way to how I use color in my images. Color activates feelings, and in a drawing you need to create as much feeling as possible since the illustrator is creating this thing from fiction. In my work, I am creating psychological landscapes that come from the fictional reality that is in my head, so I try and use the right colors to convey those feelings I get when experiencing those psychological spaces.

**KM: Your work has been more experimental, what has been your biggest challenge in finding your style?**

MO: My biggest struggle is definitely having the fear that my work can seem repetitive. Like I mentioned before, color is a really important part of my work, so for me, I always worry that using a similar color palette too often or across too many images in a

finalized group can seem like I took all of those images in one go when in reality it just conveys the specific emotion I was feeling. Abstract work takes the reality out of the photograph and forces the mind to try and find familiar things, whether it be shapes or colors, which is why sometimes abstract images can look very similar. It's like when your brain completes gaps in lines- I can't remember that that is called but I think it's some Freudian thing.



**KM: How has your practice changed over time? Do you have a preference between analog and digital?**

MO: I look at my work on an experimental spectrum. I feel that my digital work is often on the side that is most experimental in the sense that it completely distorts reality and is extremely disorienting, whereas my analog work provides more grounding elements and only slightly disorients the viewer. I prefer to find things in a natural landscape that look out of place and that confuse the viewer. In short, I focus on the same base idea but photograph it in two different ways depending on the medium.

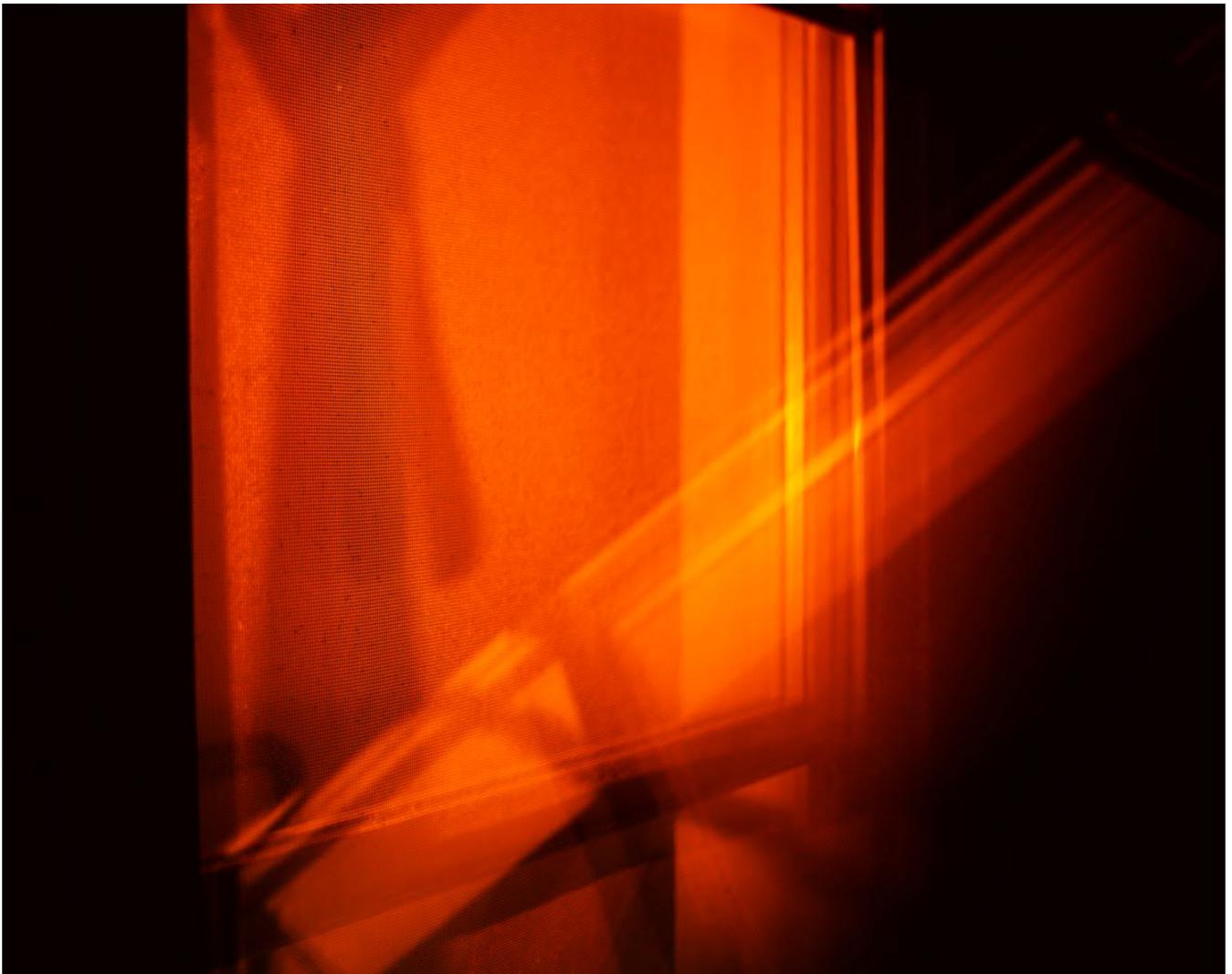
**KM: The work has always been predominantly made in-camera, why do you choose to work in-camera versus digital manipulation? Has this changed?**

MO: At first I felt that since I was talking about my personal experience, I had to figure out a way to physically and manually manipulate the space I was photographing. It had to have some other element of my in the physical image beside the fact that it was about my personal experience. As time went on and as I kept trying to make more work, I realized that digital manipulation allowed me to do things that I simply couldn't do in-camera, like using filters and different blending modes that allowed me to push manipulation of color and form to seriously distort the image.



**KM:** work ranges from abstract portraits to disorienting landscapes, what are some of the key things you want the viewer to take away from the work?

**MO:** I want the viewer to be able to understand and experience the complexities of recovery from a mental disorder, and what comes with that. In my case, I'm talking about EDNOS (eating disorder not otherwise specified) and how over a decade of having this disorder and not getting diagnosed or treated until my sophomore year of college has affected my mental health and space. I want people to look at my work, read about my experience, and feel that they can connect with it.





**KM:** The sky and the environment seem to be a big part of the work, particularly abstracting these elements, how do you feel that these talk to the portraits also included in the work? Does one element feel more important than the other?

**MO:** I feel like I have always felt at home when I am surrounded by nature, so maybe when I think of my portraits being in a body of work with my landscapes, it is because it feels like a version of my identity. I also feel that whenever I imagine myself in a space, it's in a natural landscape- when I think of my psychological landscapes, I feel that they are outside. The sky and night sky however are important to my work in the sense that it represents the infinite worlds that are dispersed in the universe, and that I as the photographer have the opportunity to create as many realities for myself as there are stars. Maybe that acts as a sort of comfort for me, knowing that my psychological space is not the only place that is riddled with a million different places at one given time.



**KM:** I know you recently worked on discussing body image but reverted back to working on things that feel tied more to an emotion, do you feel that body image still has an influence in your work even when you don't make images directly about that subject matter?

**MO:** Absolutely- body image affects my headspace every single day. Some days I wake up and I feel great but when I look in the mirror, my brain and body don't match and I strongly dislike what I see. Then that can start sending me down a path of self-destructive negative body talk, which leads to my anxiety and depression becoming heightened, and then that affects the kind of images I make. On other days, I can wake up happy and feeling great and feel truly appreciative of my body when I look at it in the mirror, and I can honor it and respect it for what it allows me to do every day. On those days, my images seem full of peace and curiosity as opposed to anxious or disorienting. I have been working on improving my self-image for years, and it will be a consistent battle for the rest of my life. As painful and difficult as it is to go through on a daily basis, I am so thankful that it acts as fuel for my creativity and art-making. I am slowly learning to take my hardships and struggles of recovery and make them into something amazing.

