

HOW magazine's Q&A with SAW

When did you first become interested in photography? My path to become a successful commercial shooter evolved from working in music, then filmmaking, then graphic design—all the while making fine art photographs throughout the journey. As for that spark of interest, it's as simple as being drawn to the emotional side of visual storytelling. No Brownie camera for me when I was 5! Rather, Midwestern invention (aka a desire not to be bored.)

How would you describe your photographic style? Poetic, moody and sincere. I strive to make soulful images, where inanimate objects stand for more than they are and my portraits of people reveal truths. In the same way that your mind cleans everything up and your memory gives you back the essential emotion, that's what I am seeking to do with my images.

Did you go to art school? I clocked in at five schools, including The School of the Museum of Fine Arts Boston and University of Southern California for "how to make an independent feature film." But the one my father's most proud of is me graduating valedictorian from bartending school.

Where do you look for creative inspiration? For a long time, I've said my favorite hobby is conversation—so, friends, food and music (in that order.) I adore the author Annie Dillard, the filmmaker Krzysztof Kieslowski and music by Robyn Hitchcock, The Smiths, The The, XTC, The Church, Cocteau Twins and R.E.M.

What are you currently working on (either personally or professionally)? Two years ago we launched our boutique design firm SAWville (SAWville.com). We just completed the branding of a new wine bar in San Francisco. We're keeping up with our photographic ad assignments and putting together a fine art show of my urbanscapes profiling beautiful buildings that are closed to the public in downtown Los Angeles. My most recent fun job was a shoot for Adobe software; we rented an amusement park for the day and strapped a couple cameras (and me) to the roller coaster.