

KAI MAGAZINE

THE MAGAZINE FOR ARTISTS





Welcome to Kai Magazine

We are so excited to share our May issue celebrating Mother's Day with you! In this issue, we feature mothers from all different walks of life. We are proud to showcase the amazing diversity of mothers out there, and we hope that this issue will inspire all of our readers to celebrate the mothers in their own lives. From single mothers to working mothers to stay-at-home mothers, all moms are amazing and deserving of our love and admiration. So please enjoy this special issue, and don't forget to show your mom some extra love this Mother's Day!

Kai Magazine

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FRONT COVER

Model: Maham "Allie" Abid

Model IG: @mabidallie

Photographer: Larry Monteith

Photographer IG: @larrymonteith

MUA: Phosha Ravenel

BACK COVER

Model: Alicia "Red" Richardson

Model IG: @hey_itsred

Photographer: Megan Kai

Photographer IG: @megankaii

MUA: Victoria Behrends

MUA IG: @victoriaimage



Photographer: Ben Egelson
Model: Colleen Hoerle

Two Bright Pink Lines

Written by Kai Magazine

Many moons ago, on a day in May, a young woman stared at two bright pink lines attempting to comprehend what they meant. A second test and then another, but two bright pink lines appeared each time. This is a scenario that many women worldwide experience...but they do not all have the same ending. An infinite number of paths can follow those two bright pink lines.



For the May 2022 Issue of Kai Magazine, you submitted your stories for a chance to be selected for the first-ever Mother's Day giveaway. It was clear from the submissions that you have all walked many different paths. Each story was unique, laced with love, courage, compassion, and more. Tears flowed freely. Choosing three winners was an insurmountable task. Here are some of your amazing entries.

"My kids are and have always been my driving force." Some of your stories unfolded as childhood sweethearts, while others were arranged marriages. You highlighted the struggles of being a single parent...whether it was becoming a single mother at a young age or after a bitter divorce. These mothers fought to provide stability for their children, often following years of emotional, mental, and physical abuse. Some learned to stand on their own two feet for the first time in their lives, returned to school, or started a new business so they could provide their children with a better future.

From planned births to unexpected surprises, you shared how you "have an unbreakable bond" with your child or children. For some, that bond developed immediately; for others, it grew slowly over time. Despite the struggles, lack of sleep, unending diaper changes, no longer being called by your name, hormonal changes, and the list goes on, one thing was clear, you cherish being a mother.

The trending theme was always "putting everybody else's needs above your own." A mother's day is never over, from caring for your child's or parents' special needs to working mothers. You shared how sometimes you get so deep into the role of caretaker that it's hard to practice self-care consistently.

TWO BRIGHT PINK LINES CONTINUED

“She showed me the meaning of unconditional love.” “She is a better mother to my children than I could have ever dreamed for.” You also had your version of what being a mother means to you. We typically assume a mother is a woman who gives birth to a child. This is far from the only truth. Mothers are formed via several circumstances. From foster moms, step-moms, and mothers-in-law, to name a few, you shared how these unique women stepped into a mother’s role with open arms.

No two stories were alike. Each one forged its own path. Which story resonates with you? What path did you follow after seeing those two bright pink lines?

What about the young woman, you ask...well, she too forged a different path. She researched and debated what to do for a little while. The father was no longer in the picture, and having children was not on her list of things to do. Eventually, she realized what a blessing it would be to have a child. She pictured the baby with soft brown eyes, curly dark hair, and a peppering of freckles across the bridge of their little nose. To get lost in that newborn scent, learn to decipher each cry and document every milestone. She made all kinds of plans.

A few weeks later, while walking around at a local rodeo, sirens wailed from the overhead speakers; a few tornadoes were spotted, and the sky turned gray. Everyone was ordered to evacuate...people were all running toward their cars...it was utter chaos. At that moment, the young woman felt a sharp horrible pain that caused her to double over. She eventually made it to her car, drove to the ER, underwent the most painful examination in her life, and received the heartbreaking news that her body was aborting all her awesome plans.

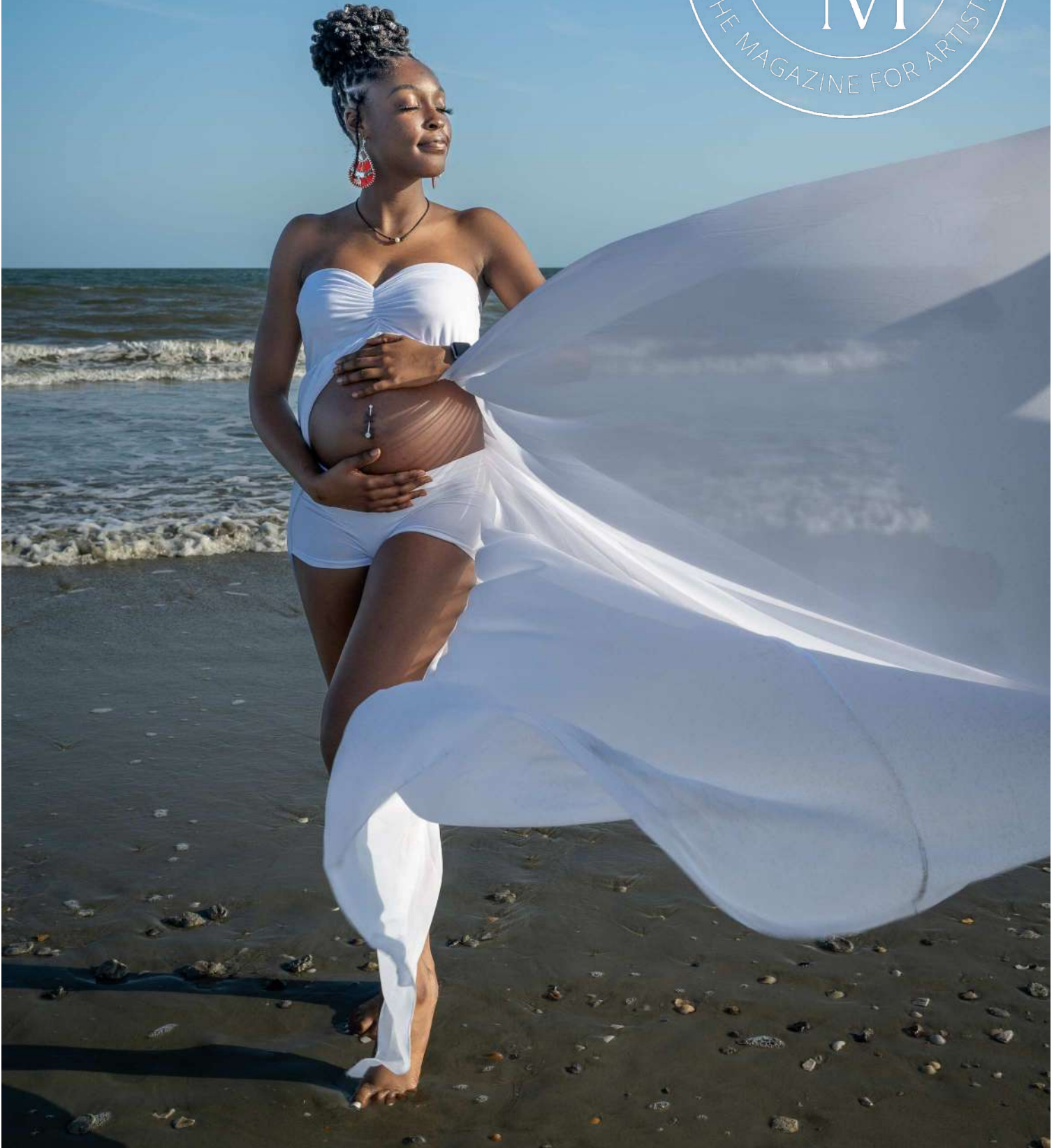
And that was her path, following those two bright pink lines. Every May, she reflects on what could have been with an imagined child who may have had soft brown eyes, curly dark hair, and a peppering of freckles across the bridge of their little nose. While she never became a mother, she did, for a moment in time, feel a sliver of that unconditional love a mother has for an unborn child. She never shared her story and always disguised her tears for her loss. But that is a different story altogether.

Many other stories are left to tell: losing a child, postpartum depression, infertility, childless, same-sex parents, surrogacy, adoption, and the list goes on.

Want to share your story with us?

Reach us via email: itskaimagazine@gmail.com.

Photographer: Claudia Rios
Photographer IG: @_claudiariosusa
Model: Shatterria Mays
Model IG: @keke_mays_





Photographer: Claudia Rios
Photographer IG: [@_claudiariosusa](#)
Model: Daisha Taylor & her sons
Model IG: [@daitaylor_](#)

Model Name: Lacy Puckett

Model IG: @prbylacy

Photographer Name: Megan Renee

Photographer IG: @megan_renee_creative



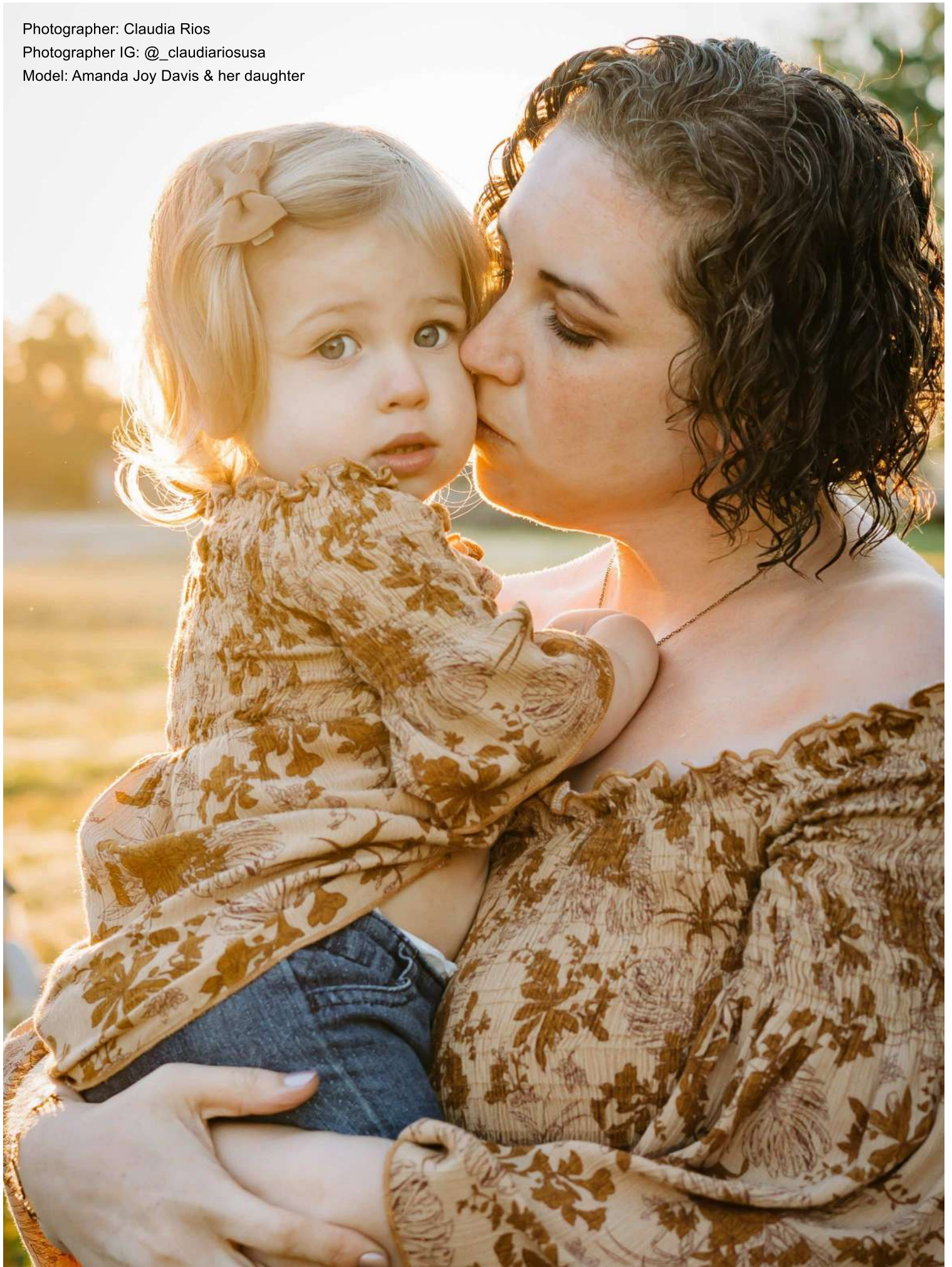
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Photographer: Claudia Rios

Photographer IG: @_claudiariosusa

Model: Amanda Joy Davis & her daughter



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Photographer: Larry Monteith
Photographer IG: @larrymonteith
Model: Maham "Allie" Abid
Model IG: @mabidallie
MUA: Phosha Ravenel

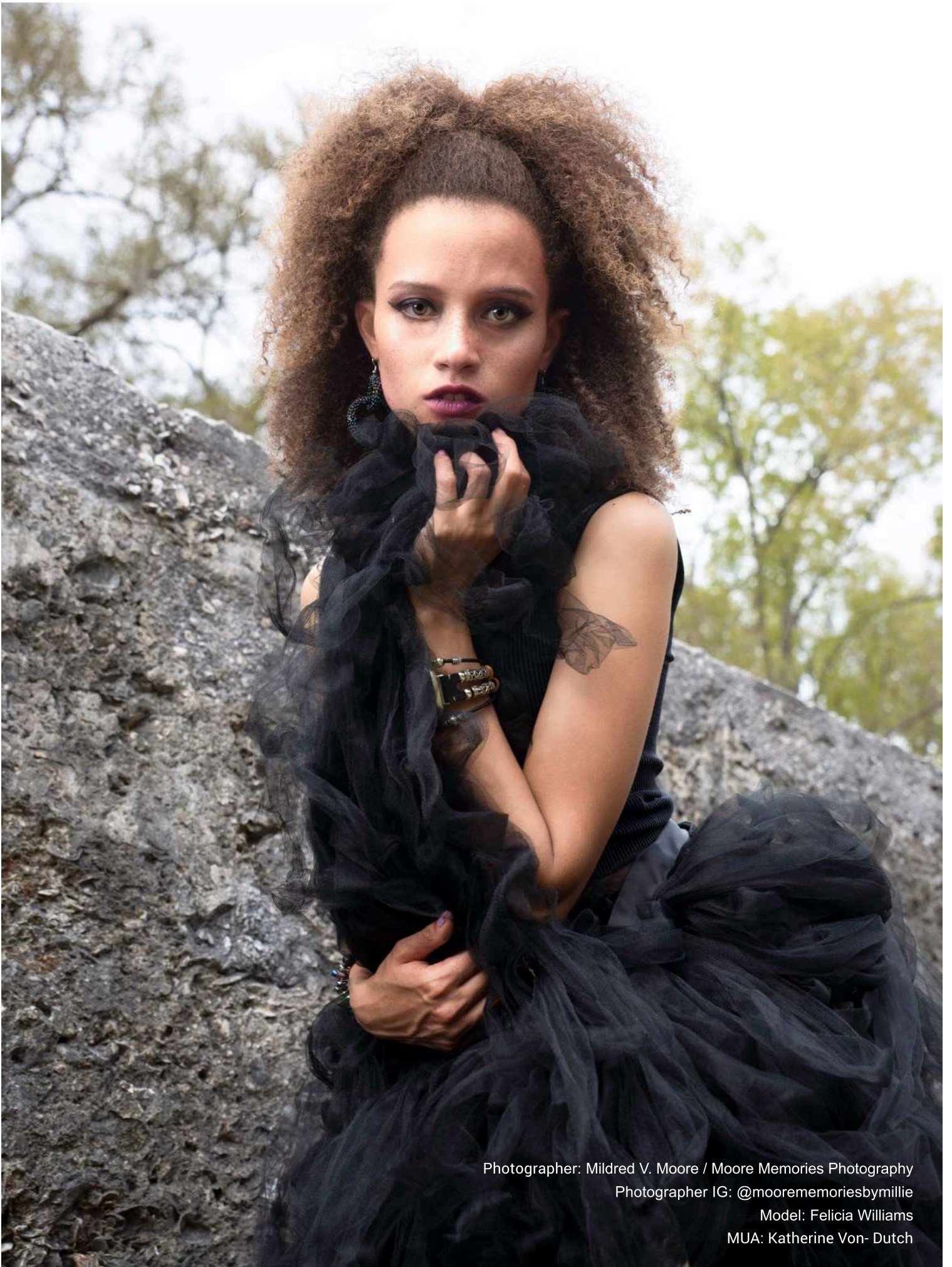
Photographer: Amy Gerhardt, Pink Chair Photography LLC

Model: Amanda

HMUA: Adrienne Culp

Jewelry: Beverly Price, Nastava Artisan Jewelry





Photographer: Mildred V. Moore / Moore Memories Photography

Photographer IG: @moorememoriesbyillie

Model: Felicia Williams

MUA: Katherine Von- Dutch





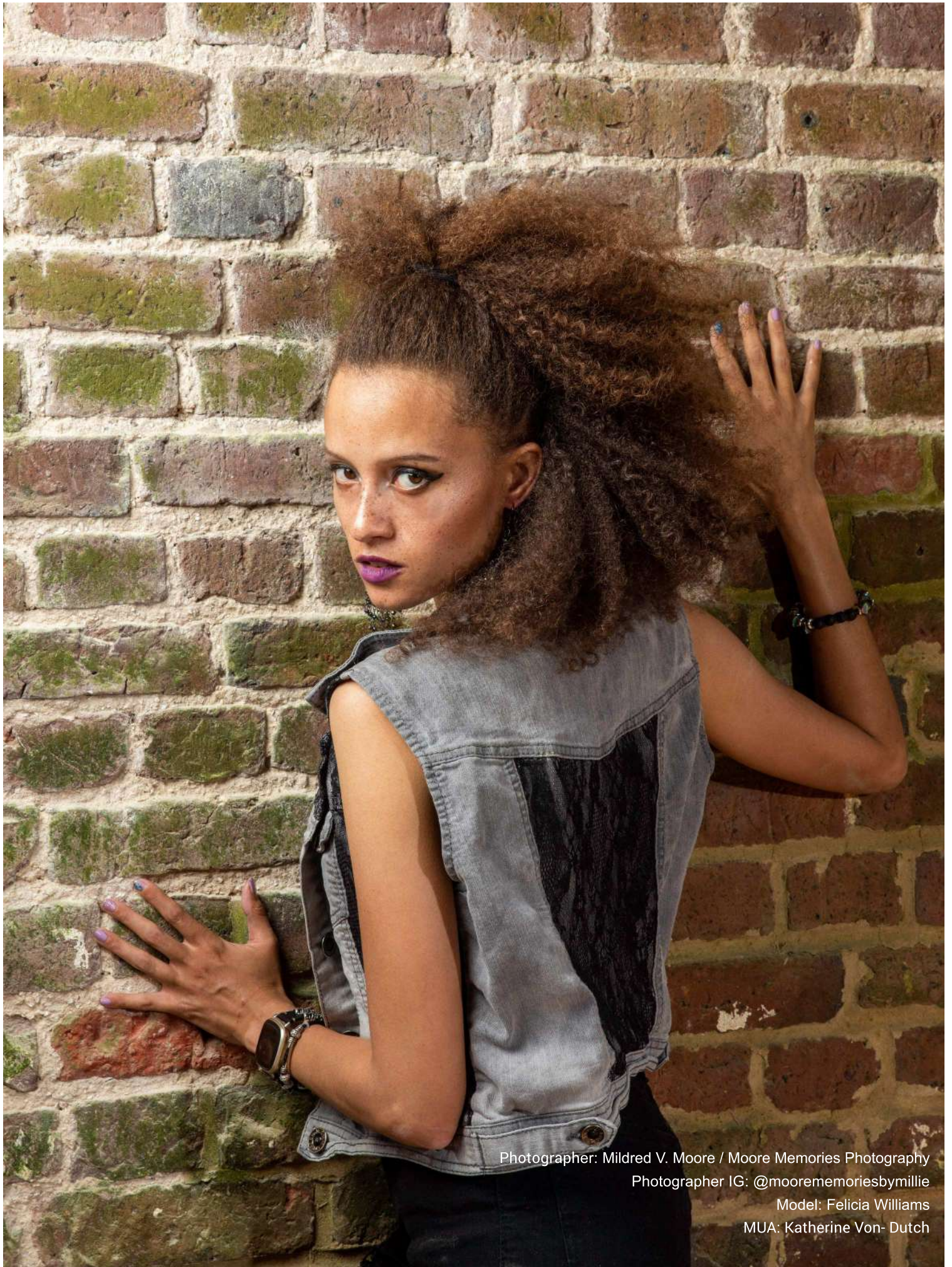
Model's Name: Teresa Carter

Model's IG: @trayrayno

Photographer's name: Joe DeSio

Photographer's IG: @josephdesiophotography

MUA: @beatsby_domonique



Photographer: Mildred V. Moore / Moore Memories Photography

Photographer IG: @moorememoriesbymillie

Model: Felicia Williams

MUA: Katherine Von-Dutch

EDEN
AT GRACEFIELD

Luxury
Wedding
Venue



"Whatever your vision—an intimate gathering under ancient live oaks, an indoor-outdoor celebration in our elegant event barn, or a smaller reception on the veranda of the Manor house, overlooking our sparkling lake and secluded gardens — we have the setting to make it come true." - Eden at Gracefield

Eden at Gracefield

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Liz Ramirez is a certified yoga teacher, Reiki practitioner, and Akashic records reader, she also holds a certification in sound healing which has become one of her favorite services to the world.

MOTHER'S DAY GIVEAWAY

There are very few places as gorgeous as Eden at Gracefield, located in Walterboro, South Carolina. This great oak tree-laden property boasts five homes, nine lakes, a luxury barn, and many other breathtaking features. Paul and Laura Walker acquired Eden several years ago and have poured their love, talent, and passion into making this a dream destination. They host weddings, gatherings, and other special events at this magnificent location.

Laura opened her doors to Kai Magazine for us to host our first-ever Mother's Day giveaway. Our three winners were treated to luxury accommodations at the Manor House, where they spent a day of pampering and enjoying the beauty of Eden. Our ladies were treated to a beauty makeover by the talented Victoria Behrends (@victoriaimage), followed by a photo session by our very own amazing Megan Kai. The event concluded on the veranda, overlooking a 27-acre lake, with a soul-touching sound bath led by Liz Ramirez from Still Soul Studio.

The day was sheer perfection, and our three ladies added to the momentous occasion with their loving spirit, heartfelt stories, and fun personalities. Please meet Casey Terrell, Patti Pyatt, and Alicia Richardson.





Featured Mother

CASEY TERRELL

KM: Welcome, Casey! We loved your story and can't wait to learn more about your road to motherhood. Tell us a little about yourself.

Casey: Thank you! But foremost, thank you for offering this opportunity. It has been amazing. I am here with my mother-in-law, Patti. I have been married to her son, Ryan, for 16 years, and we have a son together. I also have a daughter from a prior relationship.

KM: It sounds like you were a young mother. Did you experience any challenges?

Casey: Absolutely. I had my daughter when I was seventeen, and it was hard. I was raised by functioning alcoholics, and I just didn't have the right tools to know the meaning of a healthy relationship. I was just a shell of a person.

KM: How did things change for you?

Casey: It was in the power of being loved unconditionally for the first time in my life that I began to heal. I love my husband, and he's an incredible father. However, his mother is an amazing woman. She welcomed my daughter and me into her family with open arms from day one. She took me in as her own daughter, showered me with unconditional love, and provided me with the type of relationship I was missing from my own mother. My relationship with my mother was complicated. I've learned so much from Patti. She is my role model; I look up to her and love her beyond words. She has significantly shaped and changed my adult life. I am a better mother to my children because of her.

KM: What are things you try to teach your children?

Casey: I show my children unconditional love and instill the importance of self-worth, especially my daughter. I tell her she is beautiful all the time. I want my children to know how special they are and how much I love them.



KM: What advice would you give to parents?

Casey: Show your kids that you love them, especially through actions. Also, listen to them...it's important that they feel heard.

KM: That's great advice. Any parting words?

Casey: This experience has been amazing. I feel beautiful...my hair and makeup are perfect. I am also a part-time photographer and yoga instructor, so being in front of the camera will only make me a better photographer. The sound bath was also a unique experience. It was the perfect ending to an already perfect day.

KM: Thank you, Casey. You can find Casey on IG @casey_michelle_photography.







Patti Pyatt

KM: Hello Patti! Thank you for being here with us today. You are a breath of fresh air. Love your giving spirit and contagious smile. Tell us a little about yourself.

Patti: You are too kind. Today has been a much-needed escape from reality. Everyone has been so welcoming and inviting. It truly has been a wonderful experience. I am retired and have two children.

KM: Share with us your journey into motherhood.

Patti: Well...I will start with I never wanted to have kids. It's surprising because my mother and sister were both very nurturing individuals who always gave freely to others, but it wasn't something I wanted. Imagine my surprise when I became a single parent at the age of 23. I had to refocus my life and learn how to be a mother.

KM: What did you learn?

Patti: My son taught me the greatest lesson of all...how to love and how to show compassion. He made me a mother, and it's the greatest gift of all. He and my daughter are my world. When I met my daughter's father, he also had a son. I was blessed with being a stepmother and loving someone else's child. Our marriage didn't last, and I again found myself raising my daughter alone at the age of 35.

KM: Your capacity to love others and your giving spirit is very apparent, does this stem from your life's journey?

Patti: I credit my mother, she was an incredible person, and I miss her every single day. I cared for her when she fell ill with kidney cancer and Alzheimer's disease, and watching her fade away destroyed me. She was a vibrant and independent woman who taught me to be strong. She showed me to love unconditionally and to always be there for those we love.



KM: Those are great lessons. Do you have any other advice for our mothers out there?

Patti: I would tell them to do it better than I did! Find what makes you happy, and don't be afraid to go after it. Enjoy life to the fullest.

KM: Are you following your own advice? Now that you are retired, how are you living your best life?

Patti: I have spent the last 37 years caring for others that it's so hard to take time for myself. But I am. I set goals, and I'm following my dreams. This past January, I went to Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon to celebrate my birthday, and I have Niagara Falls next on my list!

KM: That's awesome, Patti! We want to thank you and wish you the best.

Patti: Thank you! I had such a great time. Eden at Gracefield is breathtaking. This has truly been an awesome experience.







Alicia "Red" Richardson

KM: Hello Ms. Alicia...aka Red! We love your support and can always count on you to bring your model A game at all Kai Events!

Red: You guys do such an amazing job putting together all these events. I have loved photography since middle/high school and was scouted to model in 2012. It's been history since then. These events bring the best of my two worlds...being in front and behind the camera.

KM: You are a model, photographer, and mom. Tell us more about your world.

Red: Yes, I am a mom to two beautiful children, ages 5 and 11. We are survivors, we have been through so much, and I am thankful to be their mom each day. My sole purpose is about my children being happy.

KM: Please share your story with us, Alicia.

Red: You know, I was bullied in school quite a bit due to my weight and my overall explosive personality. I know I can be too much for people, and that's ok. I was also very sheltered and, therefore, completely unprepared for the road I found myself in at the young age of 17. I got married and literally learned to be an adult in the course of one year. Unfortunately, it was not a fairytale romance. I endured many years of mental, emotional, and physical abuse.

KM: I am so sorry, Alicia. How did you survive this horrible situation?

Red: It was a long and painful journey. After enduring years of abuse, infidelity, and disrespect, I finally reached my breaking point. One night we were driving; he was pretty drunk and started a fight. He suddenly looked at me and told me verbatim it was inevitable that he would cheat on me again. I realized that I couldn't keep holding on to a broken dream. For so long, I relied on my Christian beliefs to carry me through this situation. But I knew I had to leave. I opened my heart to God and asked Him for strength and guidance. And I believe he did...that very night as I drove, song after song were messages of hope, to move on and that everything will be okay. And it was. My children and I are doing just fine.



KM: I'm sure it was difficult.

Red: It was, but I strapped on my big girl shoes and hit the ground running. I went from having to beg people for help and having next to nothing to owning my own business and fully taking care of my kids on my own. More importantly, I realized my worth and who I am. I lead my life with love, kindness, and confidence.

KM: What words of wisdom do you share with your children?

Red: Don't rush to become an adult and enjoy your freedom. I always want to provide a safe and positive environment where they can succeed.

KM: That's awesome! Do you have any advice for our mothers reading your story?

Red: Yes!!! There is no set way to be a perfect parent. Do the best you can, and you define your best.

KM: Great advice, Alicia. Thank you for being with us and sharing a little bit of your story. You are amazing all around. We wish you the very best.

Red: Thank you, and thank you for having me. It was a lot of fun, and I especially loved bonding with all the women today. Spending quality time with other amazing women is important.

KM: We agree. You can find Alicia on IG @hey_itsred and on Facebook at facebook.com/incredibleimagingwithalicia and Facebook.com/aliciathered



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ROOFTOPS, FLASHES AND FIREHOSES

By Melissa Summer
(@melsummerart)



Model: Maham "Allie" Abid
Model IG: @mabidallie
Photographer: Melissa Summer
Photographer IG: @melsummerart
MUA: Adrienne Culp
MUA IG: @makeuptherapy55

"You're new here, right? Don't worry – we'll start you off with one of the more experienced models," said Jonathan.

He pointed across the room in Henry's Rooftop Bar through a myriad of photography lighting and softboxes towards a dark-haired woman in a curve-hugging velvet dress, luxurious shrug, and flawless, professional makeup.

And I got the logic. New photographer? Start them off with someone who has modeling experience and knows how to pose and move in front of the camera.

What should have been something reassuring was anything but.

I was scared shitless.

At my first Kai event, I wasn't sure what to expect.

A fellow photographer had invited me.

So, I'd psyched myself up for this social event, true to my introverted roots.

You work from home, and you've wanted to meet more people in Charleston. Just 15 minutes. If you hate it after 15 minutes, you can leave.

I'd done plenty of portrait and family photography by starting out like many photographers asking friends and family and bribing my neighbors with free photographs of their grandkids so I could practice. I planned to sit in a dark corner and quietly observe the first 20 minutes. To watch how photographers and models paired up, to see how long they shot together and who took the lead.

But I'd never worked with anyone who'd consider themselves a model.

And that's not the part that freaked me out most.

I knew of Allie. She didn't know me. I'd been on the Kai Events Facebook group for a month, so I'd seen photos of the models. Allie impressed me. Pictures of her always turned out gorgeous.

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In my mind, I'd go to a few more of these events to get the hang of it before I shot with someone like Allie. And ideally, we'd shoot outdoors, not indoors, where the extent of my experience included my living room with dogs for models.

But being new, I wasn't about to tell Jonathan no.

Jonathan made introductions and left us to start. I recommended we shoot near a big window (natural light!), and we headed that way.

"Ok," I said, going through the mind of my portrait poses and fidgeting with settings, "so maybe put your hand like...."

And then I looked up and stopped. Allie was already perfectly posed toward my camera. Head precisely turned for the most stunning angle, front knee bent and one hand up around her shoulder gracefully holding the edge of her coat!

I couldn't have posed her better if I'd tried. I wouldn't have even thought to pose like that. This. Was. AMAZING!

In hindsight, it's obvious that experienced models don't need to be posed like other people.

I stood there, kind of awestruck, for what felt like an eternity. I didn't realize that until that moment, and then I remembered the camera in my hand and brought the viewfinder to my eye.

The next 10 minutes were a blur as she changed poses and expressions naturally and effortlessly. I fumbled with settings and tried to make small talk about anything BUT all the photos I'd seen of her. Then I retreated to a quiet spot where I could click through the images. We parted way.

She was stunning.

The photos I'd taken?

Not stunning. Most were just OK.

With each click of the selector button, I thought about what I'd do the next time differently around (in Homer Simpson's voice).

Bring a flash (d'oh!). Increase shutter speed since the model is moving (d'oh!). Take both horizontal and vertical photos (d'oh)!

As the event went on, I worked with at least five other models and got comfortable with the format and process. After 2 hours of shooting, I happily skipped out the door because I was so excited to get home and edit the shots.

I was exhausted. But I was also invigorated. And I knew I'd be attending every one of these events I could in the future.

Shooting for the first time at a Kai event definitely felt like drinking from a firehose.

But that one really good photo I got of Allie? It was fire. At least from my perspective.

And it was worth the firehose.

WRITTEN BY
MELISSA SUMMER

Kai Events



Wow, can you believe it's already been a year? It feels like just yesterday; I was getting started with my research and planning my first Kai event. I had no idea what to expect or how it would turn out. But I'm so glad I took the plunge and went for it. Fast forward one year, and there are over 450 members in the Kai community, with several successful events under our belt. I have made so many new friends and connections. I'm really proud of what we've accomplished in such a short amount of time, and I'm excited to see what the future holds for us. Thanks for being part of this amazing journey with me!

Photographer: Ben Egelson
Photographer IG: @ben.egelson
Model: Najah Corley
Model IG: @pure_divine_soul



Photographer: Ben Egelson
Photographer IG: @ben.egelson
Model: Colleen Hoerle
Model IG: @colleenh__





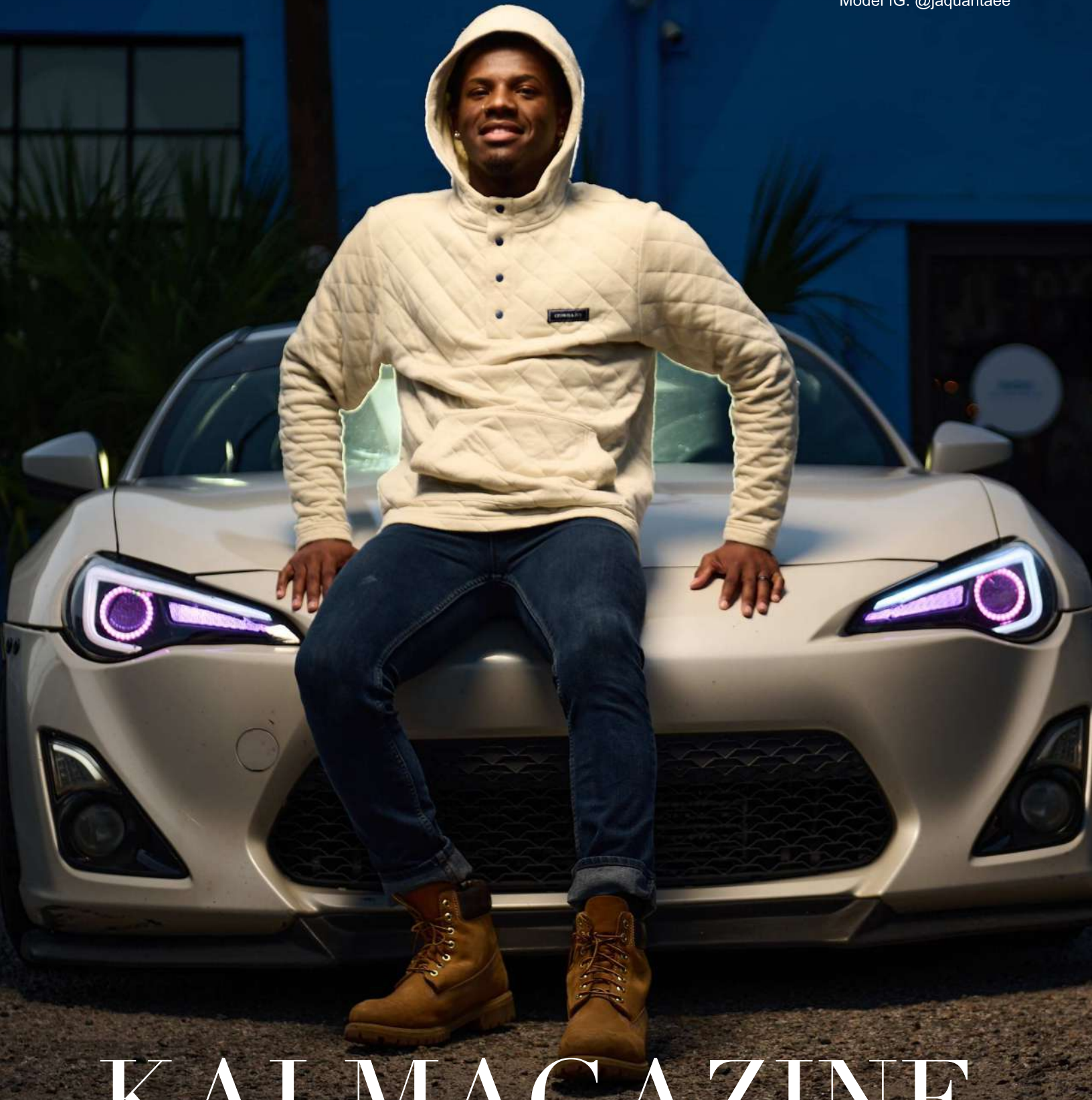
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Photographer: Russell Green

Photographer IG: @russg_photography

Model: Jaquantaé Johnson

Model IG: @jaquantaee



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Photographer: Russell Green
Photographer IG: @russg_photography
Model: Joella "JoJo" Kerr
Model IG: @joellakerr



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Photographer: Ben Egelson
Photographer IG: @ben.egelson
Model: Jaquantaé Johnson
Model IG: @jaquantaee



Photographer: Ben Egelson
Photographer IG: @ben.egelson
Model: Helen Mcgaughy
Model IG: @helen.mcgaughy



Photographer: Russell Green
Photographer IG: @russg_photography
Models: Adam, Helen, Najah, Megan & Jaimee



Photographer: Russell Green
Photographer IG: @russg_photography
Model: Najah Corley
Model IG: @pure_divine_soul



I AM COCKROACH GIRL!

Written by: Kai Magazine
Inspired by: Maham "Allie" Abid

Wild Spirit. Rambunctious and free. These are the words I would use to best describe me as a child. I knew I was different, and I wouldn't change anything that has shaped me into the woman I am today. Why cockroach girl? Because a childhood image is embedded deep within my soul that defines how I see the world. It happened amid a monsoon. With my mother yelling at me in the background to get inside the house, the image of two little cockroaches struggling to survive kept me rooted to my spot. I begged my grandpa to help me make a makeshift toy boat, and I pushed it over to where the little roaches were so they could have something to climb onto and survive. The image of one of the roaches climbing on top and floating safely away has stayed with me to this day.

I was born in Lahore, Pakistan, and moved to Charleston, South Carolina, when I was eight years old. I'm ¼ Indian, ¼ Pakistan, ¼ Arabian, and ¼ Persian. To say there weren't too many kids in school that looked like me is an understatement—growing up in two very distinct cultures brought many challenges. I was raised in a very altruistic, collective society and quickly adapted to a very individualistic society. Constantly balancing what was defined by Middle Eastern standards as selfish versus what American society considered healthy boundaries...was an internal identity crisis. I wanted nothing more than to fit in, feel beautiful and shave my mustache!

My relationship with my mother was, actually remains, complicated. As the eldest of three children, I always took on the nurturing role of my two younger siblings. As a child, I always picked up on a palpable hatred from my mother towards me. I couldn't explain it; I just knew. And hence, began my lifelong thirst to gain her approval. It didn't matter that I spoke seven languages (Urdu, English, Arabic, Hindi, Spanish, Farsi, and Punjabi), and achieved a bachelor's degree in biology and a master's degree in psychology...I still felt less than. My father and siblings have been my constant cheerleaders and, to this day, stand by me no matter the circumstances.

My road to where I am today has been a difficult journey. I endured racism following the horrific events of September 11th. I am a rape survivor. I was in an arranged marriage. I overcame both an eating disorder and an alcohol addiction. I am divorced. I struggled with postpartum depression. I survived an attempt on my life. I live with ADHD. I have attempted to commit suicide. But this is not a sad story...there is a happy ending. Because all of these events molded me into the woman, I am today. I hope that sharing my story will help another person realize that you choose how your story ends. I decided to turn the narrative around. I decided to see the beauty in all things.

My experience with racism led me to write my thesis on Perceived vs. Actual Racism Against Muslims Following the Events of September 11. It allowed for much-needed conversation. When I lay on a stretcher following an attempt on my life, a stranger walked up to me and showed me empathy. She looked me straight in my eyes and told me she would not leave me alone...she told me I was safe. Seeking counseling allowed me to begin healing, finding my voice again, and realizing my actual value. My marriage to Faraz may have been arranged, but he became the one person who taught me, unconditional love. He loved me in a way that no one else had and gave me the greatest gift of all...my daughter Ayrah Noor...my light, the light of my life. My bond with my daughter grew slowly with time and is now unbreakable. She is my child through and through. I continue to heal; I spread positivity into the world. I choose to love. I am a cockroach girl.

I wish someone would have shared their story with me to help me navigate my journey. It is taboo to speak about many things in Middle Eastern culture, including rape, mental health, postpartum depression, divorce, and addiction. I sincerely wish that my story opens those lines of communication and that it helps someone seek help, speak up, and share.

"People are just as wonderful as sunsets if you let them be. When I look at a sunset, I don't find myself saying, 'Soften the orange a bit on the right-hand corner.' I don't try to control a sunset. I watch with awe as it unfolds."

- Carl R. Rogers



Photographer: Donnie Smith
IG: @donniesmithphotography
Model: Maham Abid "Allie"
IG: @mabidallie



**FEATURED
COVER
PHOTOGRAPHER**

Image below
Larry Monteith
IG: @larrymonteith
Photographer: Linda Ho
Photographer IG: @wanderwithpandalove

Larry Monteith



I have been a professional photographer for over 40 years.

I've had the privilege of capturing special moments for people worldwide. In that time, I've developed a keen eye for detail and a knack for putting people at ease in front of the camera. I've been blessed to make a living doing something I love. For the past 22 years, I've called the Lowcountry home.

I enjoy making people look their best and capturing the beauty of this remarkable place.

