

PROFESSOR METENKO; CCNY; S-276

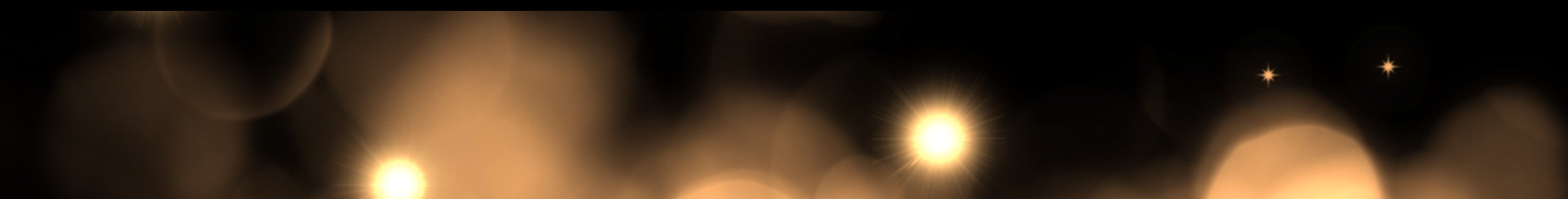
THE GRANDEUR OF MAGIC



IMAGE [1]: 'MAGIC' — BY KAMEELA PERRIER; LOCATION:
JAMAICA, QUEENS; DATE: 2010

MIA DOREN GEORGE; 10/12/25

WHILE IN THE CRADLE OF THE WOMB MY MOTHER WOULD TALK TO ME OF WHAT HAD HAPPENED THAT DAY. SHE BELIEVED I COULD HEAR HER, ALTHOUGH MY EARS WEREN'T YET FULLY FORMED. SHE TOLD ME OF MAGIC, THE PUPPY SHE HAD BEEN GIFTED YEARS BEFORE I CAME ALONG. THROUGHOUT MY MOTHER'S PREGNANCY, MAGIC KEPT HIS HEAD TO HER STOMACH, STAYED BY HER SIDE, AND HAD HIS PAW PUT ON HER NAVEL TO FEEL MY MOVEMENTS. NOW, I WONDER BACK ON MY EXISTENCE, AND THE EVENTS THAT LED ME TO WHERE, AND WHO, I AM TODAY. ONE OF THOSE ELEMENTS IS A GENTLEMAN WITH PAWS, MY BROTHER BELONGING TO ANOTHER SPECIES, MAGIC. AFTER I HAD MADE MY ENTRANCE AS A WALKING ORGANISM OF EARTH, HE NEVER LEFT MY SIDE, LETTING ME PULL HIS TAIL AS A BABY, BEING THE FIRST TO SEE ME WALK BEFORE BARKING TO NOTIFY MY MOTHER, AND SLEEPING NEXT TO ME ON THE BED, AND UNDER ME IF I WAS IN MY CRIB. EVEN AT ONE, I ADORED HIM, AND WOULD GRAB HOLD OF HIM JUST TO KEEP HIM AROUND. HE WATCHED ME GROW UNTIL HE HAD TO GO SOMEWHERE I COULD NOT. HIS DEATH MARKED ME FOR THE REST OF MY LIFE, AND TAUGHT ME THAT GRIEF IS NOT ONLY A FEELING, BUT AN IN-DEPTH PROCESS. IN THIS PIECE, I CONVERT MY NARRATIVE OF MAGIC'S DEATH INTO A VISUAL WORKING THAT CARRIES THEMES OF GRIEF, TRANSMUTING NEGATIVITY INTO POSITIVITY, GROWTH, AND MORE. MY ATTEMPT WITH THESE IMAGES OVERALL IS TO PROVOKE THOUGHTS FROM MY AUDIENCE ABOUT THOSE IN THEIR LIVES THAT BRING THEM MAGIC, AND INTENTIONALLY KEEPING THAT MAGIC ALIVE AS YOU WALK THROUGH LIFE. I WANT MY AUDIENCE'S REACTION TO BE THAT OF PONDERING, AND REFLECTION. I RETRIEVED THESE IMAGES FROM PHOTO ALBUMS IN MY HOUSE, AND EDITED THEM TO FIT THE WRITING THEY WERE PAIRED WITH, SOME COLD, AND OTHERS WARMER TO REFLECT THE TONE. MAGIC BROUGHT MAGIC INTO MY LIFE, AND HIS ESSENCE WILL NEVER LEAVE ME, NEITHER THE MAGIC HE LEFT ME WITH IN HIS WAKE.





**IMAGE [2]: 'L.U.C.A (LAST UNIVERSAL
COMMON ANCESTOR); CONNECTION OF
ALL THINGS' —**

BY KAMEELA PERRIER

LOCATION: JAMAICA, QUEENS

DATE: 2008

OUR FIRST FAMILY DOG, MAGIC, WAS NAMED FOR HIS SPEED. ONE MOMENT HE WAS IN ONE ROOM, BUT COULD RUN TO THE OTHER SO FAST, IT WAS AS IF HE WAS TRYING TO LEAVE A CLOUD OF SMOKE BEHIND LIKE IN THE CARTOONS. ME AND HIM WOULD ALWAYS BE TOGETHER. HE TAUGHT ME TO WALK, ALLOWING ME TO HOLD ON TO HIS TAIL FOR STABILITY AND THEN BE PATIENT ENOUGH TO LET ME GET MY FOOTING, BEFORE I WADDLED AWAY WITH HIM. HE GUARDED MY CRIB, AND WOULD BARK IF ANYONE HE WASN'T COMFORTABLE WITH CAME TOO CLOSE. THIS WENT ON FOR A LONG TIME. UP UNTIL I WAS EIGHT. WHEN I WAS EIGHT, EVERYTHING HAD CHANGED, SNAPPING INTO A MUCH DIFFERENT PLACE.



**IMAGE [3]: 'AN OCTOBER 2ND BIRTHDAY
SURPRISE' —**

BY KAMEELA PERRIER

LOCATION: JAMAICA, QUEENS

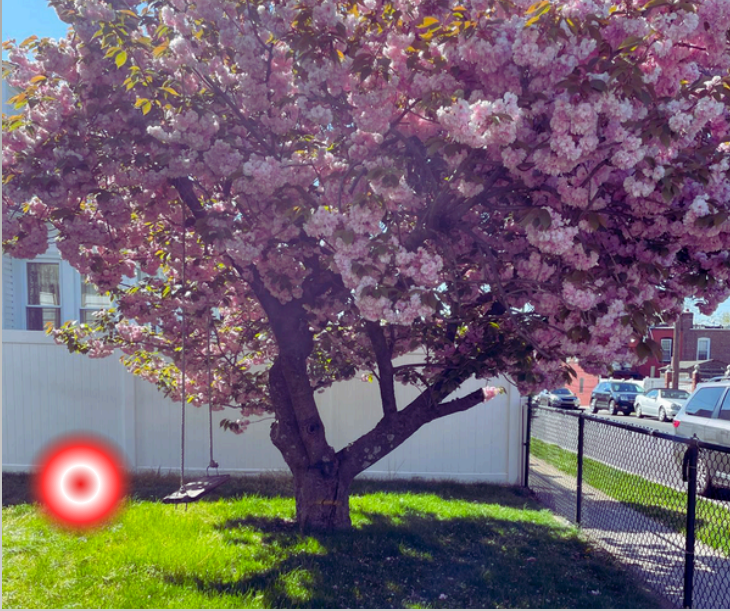
DATE: 2013

I HAVE ONE MEMORY, ONLY ONE, THAT PLAYS ON LOOP IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, AS IF ON FILM. ONE THAT I MADE A CONSCIOUS DECISION TO NEVER FORGET. IT WAS ONE OF THOSE DAYS WHERE I WAS ALONE. I HAD TRIED TO DO MY HOMEWORK TO PASS TIME, BUT THAT SEEMED TO MAKE TIME MOVE SLOWER. I TRIED EATING THE TIME AWAY, BUT THEN RAN OUT OF SNACKS. I WATCHED TV, BUT THAT TOO PROVED TO BE TOO STILL. I THEN HAD THE IDEA OF FINDING ADVENTURE OUTSIDE. I PUT ON MY HAT, MY THIN COAT, AND BOOTS BEFORE TAKING MAGIC OUT WITH ME INTO THE YARD. IT WAS FALL. THE LEAVES WERE OF ORANGE, RED, AND YELLOW HUES. THE GRASS WAS FADED, AND THE SKY WAS STILL BLUE, AS IF SUMMERS TRACES WERE STILL PRESENT. I HAD NO PERMISSION FROM MY PARENTS, NOR DESIRE TO GO OUTSIDE THE GATE, AND SO, I SAT ON THE STOOP ON MY IPAD PLAYING GAMES, AND PEOPLE WATCHING. AT ONE POINT, I SEARCHED FOR A PRETTY LEAF ON THE GROUND TO GIVE MY MOTHER UPON HER RETURN. THAT WAS WHEN MAGIC BEGAN PACING BY THE GATE, PAWING AT THE GATES WIRE AS IF SOMETHING HAD IRKED HIM SO MUCH THAT HE FELT THE YARD TO NOW BE TOO SMALL FOR HIM. HE BARKED LOUD AND REVERBED.



IMAGE [4]: 'MESSENGER CROW' —
BY MIA DOREEN GEORGE
LOCATION: NORTHWELL HOSPITAL
DATE: 2024

I LOOKED UP FROM MY IPAD TO SEE A BLIND MAN ACROSS THE STREET LOOKING TO THE RIGHT, BUT STANDING STILL. HE HAD HIS GUIDING STICK WITH HIM IN ONE HAND, AND HIS SERVICE DOG IN THE OTHER. ALTHOUGH THE BLIND MAN WAS LOOKING TO HIS RIGHT ON THE SIDEWALK ACROSS FROM US, HIS SERVICE DOG WAS STARING RIGHT AT MAGIC. THE DOG WAS BIG, BROWN, AND BURLY, WITH DROOPY EYES AND LONGER EARS. I LOOKED DOWN AT A LEAF I HAD BEEN INSPECTING, JUST FOR A MOMENT, AND THAT'S WHEN MY EARS PICKED UP THE SOUND OF THE CREAKING METAL GATE SWINGING OPEN. THE KNOT MUST'VE GOTTEN LOOSE. I LOOKED UP TO SEE MAGIC LUNGING FOR THE BLIND MAN AND HIS DOG. I DIDN'T UNDERSTAND NOR COMPREHEND QUICKLY ENOUGH, BUT MY SLOWLY FORMING PANIC QUICKLY TRIPLED. I SHOUTED OUT FOR MAGIC, TEARS ALREADY PRICKING MY EYES, AND MY HEART RACING AT A SPEED THAT SCARED THE REST OF MY BODY. MAGIC DIDN'T EVEN LOOK BACK TO ME. HE WAS RUNNING WITH SUCH PURPOSE, MAYBE TERRITORIAL, MAYBE NOT. THEN THE BLUR OF A CAR APPEARED BEFORE ME. THE SCREECHING HALT OF A SPEEDING CAR, THE HARSH THUD, THE LIMP BODY, THE CAR STOPPING.



**IMAGE [5]: 'GRAVESITE' —
BY MIA DOREEN GEORGE
LOCATION: JAMAICA, QUEENS
DATE: 2023**

EVERYTHING HAPPENED A BIT FASTER AFTER THAT. WHEN MY FATHER CAME HOME, I WAS SHOWN MAGIC'S BODY ONE LAST TIME. MAGIC WAS BURIED UNDER A TREE IN OUR YARD. MY MOTHER WAS CALLED AND TOLD—ONLY RESPONDING WITH AN "I HAVE TO GO." I CLEANED AND DID MY HOMEWORK. I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE WORRYING ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE OTHER THAN HOW TO HANDLE THEIR GRIEF, SO I DID WHAT I COULD TO MAKE THE HOUSE LOOK NICER THAN IT FELT. I REALIZED LATER THAT NIGHT IN BED, MY EYES WET AND THROAT DRY, THAT I FELT SO SMALL. OF COURSE, I WAS ONLY EIGHT, SO SMALL I WAS. HOWEVER, THIS SMALL WAS DIFFERENT. IT WAS THE KIND OF WEAKENED AND WITHERED SMALL. SOMETHING FELT DISLODGED FROM ME, A PIECE OF ENERGY MISSING, AND GONE—SEEMINGLY NEVER TO RETURN. I FELT I HAD FAILED MAGIC. I SHOULD'VE GONE INSIDE WITH HIM SOONER, I SHOULD'VE TRIPLE CHECKED THE GATE. I SHOULD'VE RUN AFTER HIM? NO, THEN WE WOULD BOTH BE DEAD. I SHOULD'VE DONE SOMETHING. THE NEXT DAY I CAME HOME TO FIND ALL OF MAGIC'S THINGS GONE. MY MOTHER MEANT NO HARM BY IT, BUT HER WAY OF DEALING WITH GRIEF WAS: "OUT OF SIGHT, OUT OF MIND". I TRIED TO DO THAT TOO, BUT IT DIDN'T WORK FOR ME. I STILL THOUGHT HE DIED DUE TO MY IGNORANCE AND NEGLIGENCE.



**IMAGE [6]: 'LIFE IS A CIRCLE' —
BY KAMEELA PERRIER
LOCATION: JAMAICA, QUEENS
DATE: 2008**

NOW MAGIC'S GRAVE, OF WHICH I STILL VISIT, GROWS FLOWERS THAT ALWAYS SEEM TO HAVE A BEND IN THEIR STEM. I LIKE TO BELIEVE HE IS REACHING OUT TO ME THROUGH THEM. MEMORIES KEEP THOSE WHO ARE DEAD ALIVE IN SOME WAY. TELLING STORIES, LOOKING AT PHOTOGRAPHS, AND SIMPLY REMEMBERING. THESE ARE ALL SMALL WAYS OF CELEBRATION OF THE LIFE ONCE CHERISHED. HE PLAYS IN THE BACK OF MY MIND, AND WILL NEVER STOP DOING SO. I NOW KNOW AND FEEL HIS ENERGY WILL ALWAYS LIVE ON BECAUSE OF HOW STRONG IT WAS, AND THAT IS THE TETHER BETWEEN ME AND MY MAGIC. I SEE THAT NOW.

REFLECTION:

IN 'THE GRANDEUR OF MAGIC', I MADE IT A POINT TO UTILIZE IMAGES FROM MY PERSONAL ALBUM COLLECTIONS AT HOME BECAUSE I FEEL THEY PERFECTLY ENCAPSULATE THE FEELING OF MEMORY AND NOSTALGIA I WANTED TO CONVEY TO THE READER IN THIS VISUAL NARRATIVE PIECE. WHILE LOOKING THROUGH OTHER FREE USE IMAGES, I STARTED TO FIND THAT NONE OF THEM SPURRED A FEELING OF CONNECTION IN ME, EVEN IF THEY PERFECTLY FIT THE VISUALS I WAS LOOKING FOR. SO I BEGAN LOOKING RIGHT IN MY OWN HOME. I EDITED THE IMAGES TO FIT THE TONE OF THE WRITING THEY WERE TIED WITH. SOME WARM, OTHERS COLDER TO REFLECT NOT ONLY THE TONE, BUT MY FEELINGS DURING THE TIME OF WHICH THIS NARRATIVE TOOK PLACE IN MY LIFE. I ARRANGED THEM IN WAY OF TELLING A NARRATIVE, TO FLOW WITH THE WRITING. THESE IMAGES FELT RIGHT BECAUSE THEY SHOWCASED THE BOND BETWEEN MAGIC AND I, AND HOW THAT, IN ITSELF, WAS MAGIC. THE CROW REPRESENTING MISFORTUNE, THE TREE BEING ATOP WHERE MAGIC IS BURIED, BUT STILL IN FULL BLOOM DURING SPRING, AND LEANING TO ME, ETC. I WANTED TO INCLUDE MY MOTHERS PICTURES SPECIFICALLY AS WELL BECAUSE SHE ALWAYS SAYS THAT MAGIC WAS HER FIRST CHILD. SHE ADORED MAGIC AS WELL, AND I FELT IT WRONG TO LEAVE HER OUT OF THIS PROJECT. THE IMAGE I CHOSE FOR MY COVER IS OF MAGIC SITTING. ALTHOUGH IT IS SIMPLE, IT CARRIES THE EERIE DEPTH OF BEING THE EMOTIONAL FOCAL POINT OF THIS PIECE. I CHOSE IT AS MY COVER IMAGE BECAUSE THE ABSENCE OF VISIBLE EYES WITHIN THE PICTURE, DUE TO HIS FUR BEING SO BLACK, DELVES INTO THE THEME OF HIS ESSENCE EXISTING IN HIGHER PLANES AND SPIRITUAL SPACES THAT HIS BODY CANNOT GO INTO. EYES REPRESENT WINDOWS TO THE SOUL, AND HIS BEING UNSEEABLE SHOWS HIS SOUL BEING INFINITE. THIS PERFECTLY ALIGNS WITH MY INTENT. HE IS SITTING, BUT STILL AT ATTENTION, REFLECTING HIM BEING MY GUARDIAN FOR SO MANY YEARS, AND MY PROTECTOR. THE PICTURE GOES INTO NOT ONLY MY MEMORY, BUT ALSO HOW VIVID MAGIC IS WITHIN IT. NEVER LEAVING MY MIND, NOR MY HEART. THIS IS ALSO A VERY SPIRITUALLY HEALING PIECE FOR ME, AND I REPRESENTED THAT BY ADDING ELEMENTAL SYMBOLS, LIKE SPIRALS FOR INTERCONNECTEDNESS, AN ORB FOR MAGIC'S SOUL, A BUTTERFLY FOR TRANSFORMATIONAL GROWTH AND CHANGE, A SPOTLIGHT ATOP MAGIC'S HEAD TO SHOW THAT HE IS THE EMOTIONAL CENTER IN THE COVER, AND OTHER SMALL MAGICAL ELEMENTS TO PLAY ON HIS NAME. LASTLY, I WANTED THE BACKGROUND TO BLEED INTO COLOR TO SIGNIFY MY GROWTH THROUGH GRIEF. OVERALL, I BELIEVE I SUCCESSFULLY ESTABLISHED THE FEELINGS I WANTED TO WITH THIS PIECE.

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'THE GRANDEUR OF MAGIC' - MIA DOREEN GEORGE; 10/12/25