

2009/10 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships Kraus Family Foundation Award



KEVIN BRISCO, JR.

Fine art

Freshman

School of the Art Institute of Chicago



I hate artists. The elitism and arrogance that have characterized so many of the artists I have come to know has lead me to dislike the group as whole. Throughout high school, my art classes have consisted of students and "artists" who like to hold their knowledge over others. They presented elitist ideas and thoroughly believed that the underprivileged and under-educated students at our school were somehow "beneath" them.

I have always considered myself one of the underprivileged. My family often struggles from paycheck to paycheck, and I myself have had to work several jobs throughout my high school career to enjoy the basic comforts my more well-off classmates enjoyed. Yet despite my family's economic shortcomings, I have still managed to gain a decent education. While we never could afford private tutors or art lessons, I still managed to soak up whatever knowledge I could.



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My desire for education coupled with my own background lead to a deep concern for community involvement. I have spent many hours volunteering for both national and local political campaigns, and in my ninth grade year I regularly volunteered in the neighborhood soup kitchen. I put forth my greatest effort in my eleventh grade year, when I organized a benefit concert for the local refugees from the Darfur region. I got together the bands, employed my artistic skills to design posters and T-shirts and secured a venue. In the end we raised more than \$2,000 that went to buy clothing and household appliances for our local refugees.



Despite my disdain and desire for separation from the general consensus of artists I have come to know, I still consider myself an artist. This paradox has often come up in my artwork. Just last year I centered a concentration around the problems in modern art. I attempted to illustrate how elitist artists are trying to separate art from the common man. I went on to emphasize how the overly conceptualized works of modern artists are ultimately a weapon that will murder the power of the visual arts in the eyes of the people.



This year I visited many art schools and came into contact with many more college level and working artists. I found many of these individuals to be very devoted to the plight of the underprivileged. I would be false to pigeonhole them in with the group of elitists that I had come to dislike so much. I was forced to change my general philosophy from "I hate artists" to "I hate elitist, arrogant people who just so happen to be artists."

I am certain that should I attend art school (SAIC, in particular) my general philosophy will continue to grow. I am also certain that I will continue to champion the underprivileged, through works that display the underprivileged in our full context. I want to illustrate the humanity of the poor and cast light on the shortcomings of the society that allows people to live in poverty. I will also devote my abilities to the beautification of poorer neighborhoods, through public works, funding and anything else I can do to improve society. I want to show the world that indifference is inhumane and that we are in fact our brothers' keepers and must act accordingly.