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JOURNEY INTO THE LIFE, LOVE AND AGONY OF AN ARTIST

BY KAREN KNIGHTON PHOTOGRAPHY BY JACKO VASSILEV

Celebrated local artist EVE has done his fair share of living. He's traveled through Europe barefoot, slept in the forests of Topanga Canyon and seen his spirit carbon-copied into his beautiful daughter. An authentic artist in mind, body and soul, EVE takes all of his experiences and paints them for the world to see. His art is moving, electric and, above all, inspiring. Handpicked by 944 to log the chronicles of his life, EVE will be sharing his moments with us monthly. But for now, this tremendous talent would like to introduce himself ...

I am Black and Cherokee Indian. My father was a musician and a pimp, yet it didn't make me a gangster. My mother (God bless her) worked for General Motors — or should I say “the modern-day cement plantation.” Empowering her female wonders while juggling her employment duties, she raised four of us brothers and sisters. I was the oldest, and together we lived in a small three-bedroom house on West Holbrook Street on the north side of Flint, Mich. — or Michael Moore Town, as I call it. The place that was made famous for 15 minutes in the film *Roger and Me* about our town's tragic devastation and poverty that took place after GM transitioned to teen slave labor. Even after all the hype, my family — who worked in rain, sleet and snow with blood, sweat and tears for a happy, God-fearing, nonpolitical existence — met failure. And I grew up with Martin Luther King's dream while the rest of Black America followed.



A fly hovers in the center of the room and I can't help thinking that's what artists seem like in today's society. I swat at it with my notepad, the same way all those haughty art connoisseurs swat at me. “Go away! What do you want? You want me to buy your art?” they say in a nagging cynical voice. “You want me to do you a favor? How cheap can I have it? Just how famous are you?” Which really equates to, “You're not missing an ear like Van Gogh, but I want your soul anyway.” In a day of the life of an artist this — and much more — is likely to surface. So why do I still strive to create? Because it burns in me and its light wishes to be seen.

In the bewitched hour, I rise from my sleep and pick up a brush. I start to paint. I am heavy from the heart-wrenching facts that to be a dreamer, I must stand upon my forefathers' back and trust that I will not fall. And though I may fall, I must rise just as I have risen from my sleep and dream again.

Twelve were chosen to witness the walk of Christ, though many saw it. These 12 were to leave behind all worldly possessions to speak of one truth. What was this one truth? That blind eyes must be open! Those who see stars see the rise of dreams. Those who dream will brighten the world. Many stars inhabit the earth knowing and unknowing for blind eyes to see.

The canvas is always in darkness waiting to be born, waiting to be touched by The Messenger. The message is within us and with us, on stone, on canvas, on wood and metals, on bones and flesh. The message is you and I, the sun, the stars, the moon and the great Mother Earth. Together, we must trace our footsteps, to never be forgotten, to always be remembered by the hand, heart and soul of the artist.

To find out more about EVE, visit www.arrowspace11.com