



# Gina Figueira

## Looking through a macro lens

From a young age, I was inspired by my father to take on photography. He always had a camera with him, so it was bound to happen that my curiosity led to him teaching me how to use a camera and eventually landed me with an old film camera of my own when I was ten. I grew up, and evolved, and so did photography. Before I knew it, digital photography came into being and as my father learned more and more about digital photography, he taught me some of his newly acquired wisdom.

I eventually discovered the magic of a macro lens, where I could focus on just the smallest detail of any object. The fantastic world that lies through a macro lens is something you can never discover unless you actually look through it. I was so taken aback by this new world that I wanted to share it with as many people as possible. So came about the idea for my first solo exhibition, "Energy in Emotion" opened on my 15th birthday.

The main idea behind this was to get people to think about the images that I exhibited. Personally, when I look at any picture, be it a photograph, painting, print or anything I get a feeling, a certain vibe about it that sways my decision about whether or not I 'like' it.

I wanted to portray this in the exhibition and get people to question the images and make up their own minds about them. I felt that abstract images through a macro lens would allow for this kind of investigation because often people will pay more attention to something if they do not know what it is.



I remembered a project I did in Grade 5 on the American artist Georgia O'Keeffe, who painted huge canvasses of flowers and hung them up around New York to remind people to take some time out of their busy lives to look at the beauty around them, and how I admired her for that idea.

I love what she said, "To fill a space in a beautiful way. That is what art is to me." Looking back on that exhibition, I am definitely proud of what I accomplished at a young age, but I also see a degree of naivety as well as room for improvement.

I am now trying to gain experience and experiment with as many media as possible. I am currently doing Visual Arts as a subject for my final year at the Windhoek International School and trying to incorporate photography with other media.

I have the greatest respect for photography and will continue to adore it as a medium. What else gives you the gift of capturing the one split second of a genuine smile on someone's face or allows for you to change reality as you thought you see it by the use of a lens?

