



Rick Guidotti, Cincinnati ReelAbilities Film Festival working to change the way you view beauty



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POSTED: 9:08 PM, Sep 26, 2014
UPDATED: 9:38 PM, Sep 26, 2014



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Rick Guidotti is an internationally acclaimed fashion photographer who has spent much of his life snapping photos of some of the world's top super models.

But now he's in Cincinnati and turning his attention (and his lens) to a different type of beauty.

Guidotti's [current focus](#) is capturing on film and showcasing the uniqueness of those who have genetic, physical and behavioral differences. He hopes his work inspires millions around the globe to reevaluate what they see as beautiful.

More importantly, he wants to help ensure people with differences are seen as human beings first.



A sample of Guidotti's work

"It's all about celebrating the beauty and richness of human diversity," said Guidotti, founder of the [Positive Exposure](#), an innovative arts, education and advocacy organization working with people who face various life challenges.

He says his life changed forever when he walked by a young woman with Albinism (a genetic condition that results in loss of pigmentation in the hair and eyes) at a New York City bus stop, and wanted to make sure she and all people know they're beautiful.

"To see beauty outside of the parameters of the industry standard of beauty. To see beauty in so many unexpected places, but when you see it, it registers, it knocks you out, it knocks the wind out of you, and you'll never be the same."

On Friday, Guidotti was in Cincinnati taking pictures of some of the city's most "beautiful residents" during a private photo sessions in the homes of families impacted by disability.

"I'm here to photograph some of the most amazing people living with differences here in the Cincinnati area," he said during a photo session with Alice.



A sample of Guidotti's work

Those photos will be part of an exhibit during the ReelAbilities Film Festival, which brought the New Yorker to the Queen City.

Organized by LADD Inc., [ReelAbilities Film Festival](#) is the region's largest film festival dedicated to unite the community around world-class films and celebrities who explore and experience disability.

According to the U.S. Census, one in five Americans will experience a disability in their lifetime. The festival, originally founded in New York City in 2007, seeks to heighten the awareness of those living with disabilities of various types, by showcasing their contributions through the mediums of art and film.

This year it runs from Feb. 27 to March 7, 2015 and features a variety of celebrated documentaries like "Little World," "Touch of The Light" and "The Crash Reel," which highlights snowboarder Kevin Peace's recovery from a traumatic brain injury.

"This festival continues to foster meaningful partnerships between social-service non-profits, arts and culture organizations, academia and schools," Cincinnati Mayor John Cranley said during a news conference to announce the festival. "I am proud to say that these organizations are uniting around this festival to welcome a diverse array of stars and filmmakers to our community."

Guidotti's visit is part of 2014 ReelPrograms - a series of events leading up to the festival that is working to connect people through what they call "shared humanity."

During his weekend in Cincinnati, Guidotti is participating in a series of talks and exhibitions designed to bring attention to his mission as well as his month-long gallery show, "Positive Exposure, The Spirit of Difference FotoFocus Exhibition." An opening ceremony took place Friday at Art Academy of Cincinnati.

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"(The goal) is to get people to see those with differences not as victims, but kids and people first and foremost," he said.

His exhibition runs through Oct. 24 at the art college on Jackson Street. The gallery is open seven days a week.

Photos provided by Rick Guidotti/ReelAbilities Film Festival. Below is a video more about Guidotti's work.



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