

Rick Shimer

Biography

My name is Frederick “Rick” Alan Shimer. I am in my late 30’s, a “retired” teacher, a long time hidden artist, an environmental supporter, a builder, an entrepreneur, and a father of two beautiful daughters. I have a Bachelor of Fine Arts Degree with an emphasis in Photography from the University of North Florida, and I spent 10 years as an Art Educator at Fleming Island High School in Fleming Island, Florida (Suburb of Jacksonville.)

Most of the people that I know; know me as “Shimer,” the eclectic and eccentric photo teacher from Fleming Island High school, in North Florida. I spent a decade there and made deep friendships with coworkers, lasting bonds with students, with whom I was lucky enough to teach in the classroom, but also to mentor through the difficulties of teen life. In the classroom I challenged students to look beyond what they saw on the surface, to find meaning. In my last years of teaching we started and ended on the question, “What do you desire?” and a video from Alan Watts. As we spent time together in the classroom, I tried to help them with what they wanted. Some wanted an easy class, some wanted a voice, some were able to use the classroom as a way to make friends, others needed cool selfies for Instagram, a portfolio for college, and others still found their freedom.

Besides teaching, I have been busy with a need to help protect our planet, and have been studying alternative building techniques. I interned with Earthship Biotechture in Taos, NM for a month in 2014. “Earthships” are radically sustainable buildings that provide for the dweller and limit environmental impact tremendously. This internship led me to sell my house and move back in with my parents to start saving for the building process; as sadly, it’s next to impossible to get a loan for an Earthship. Wanting to combine my love for teaching and Earthships, I have moved my family again. We now live in the mountains of North Carolina, and we are building a retreat center that focuses on Art and Sustainable building.

During all of these events, I have been a devoted father to my two wonderful, intelligent, and confident daughters. Being “Daddy,” is the single greatest part of my life.

All of this time spent teaching others how to create art and to express themselves has impacted the amount of time that I have spent on my own artwork. I have been taking portraits and shooting weddings on the side as supplemental income to my teaching salary, but taking time for myself to create art has been difficult. Now that I am no longer teaching, and running my mouth all day, my brain has been able to quiet and the ideas are starting to flow. My artwork is about the beauty of nature and the unseen; reality as fantasy. I am learning more about energy and the impact it has on the spirit, and I know that it is critical to my work. I look forward to growing as an artist and I thank you for your part on the journey