



# Becoming the Muse of Sarah Webb

*Written by Jessica Harrington*

Then she asked me the question that would change my life forever. “Have you ever posed for an artist?” I about came unglued with excitement! I wanted to play it cool so I told her I had posed once for a friend who was a photography student. Her eyes lit up and I just knew she was going to ask me to pose too. I didn’t even consider asking my boyfriend what he thought. This had nothing to do with him—this was all about me. So before she could even get the entire question out, I was saying, “Yes, I would be honored!”

The next day I modeled with my friends. I’m not sure how well I did but over the next fifteen years I would pose for her hundreds of times—wherever we traveled, be it London, Paris, LA, Chicago or places in between. I learned the “physical” act of creating together. How to loosen up and pose naturally, allowing the light to wrap around my body and play shadow games with its beams. Knowing that what she needs to see is the perfect combination of light, color and flesh.

Over the years, as we have both grown in our own individual ways, we have also grown into this friendship that knows no spiritual boundary. Our connection will rival any in art history. I know what she wants before she even speaks. In my mind’s eye I can see what she sees, and it creates this burning desire in me to help her get what she wants—a masterpiece. I understand that it is not my physical self that she seeks, but to capture the soul that is truly who I am at that exact moment. I freely give it to her.

What’s it like to be a muse? For me it’s been the biggest blessing in my life. It’s hard to explain how the simple act of feeling free while in various states of undress could be such a pure, liberating and life altering experience. Because of that artful enlightenment, I look at my entire life in a different manner. Now all I see is light, color and expression.

Can you imagine, all that just because she saw something that I did not see in myself? Her passion drew out my passions and helped me love who I was and who I was to become. Yet that is only one of the many things I have learned from Sarah on this journey.

Memories are hard to organize when I try to think of all of our history together. Yet one thing stands out above all—we have created beauty together. I am fortunate to be part of her history—past and present. I feel truly humbled and blessed to be a part of her magnitude. Her art is a blessing to all of mankind, especially those who take the time to see the world through her eyes. **sl**

What is a muse? A muse is someone who inspires an artist—like Rembrandt’s wife, Saskia, and Picasso’s mistress, Dora Maar, who were transformed by artistic genius into symbols of all womanhood. But, how does one become an artist’s muse? For me it all started with one simple statement, “You should stick around and meet her Jess.”

Sarah Webb, the acclaimed international artist, had just returned from Europe and was on her way over at that very moment. It was no secret that she had asked my friends Melissa and Amy to pose for her. It was all the girls had been talking about for days. Sarah was coming to look at their clothes for the shoot the next day and the girls were all chattiness and giggles. Even though I hadn’t met Sarah, in hindsight, I was a little jealous I wasn’t included in their fun.

At the time, I was twenty years old and taking eighteen hours that semester, which meant plenty of homework. Plus, I had to complete the paperwork for my study abroad program, which was due in two days. In short, in my world it was school, work and occasionally sleep. I had no room for art in my brain. I was the general population, but I was also intrigued and stayed.

I remember the first time Sarah walked through the door. She had the most piercing blue eyes I had ever seen. They seemed to take in every detail around her. When we were introduced, I had an overwhelming sense of déjà vu. It really threw me off at first and I found myself following her into Amy’s room. It was like I was drawn to her. As the girls pulled out clothes and started trying them on, Sarah and I chatted.