

Smart + Strong Launches Website In Support of Global Stigma Project INFECTED & AFFECTED

July 1, 2009

Smart + Strong announces the launch of the infectedandaffected.com website in support of the global stigma project *INFECTED & AFFECTED: Portraits of a Community Combating Stigma* produced by photographer Joan L. Brown. Working with the International AIDS Society (IAS) and *POZ* magazine (poz.com), Brown photographed nearly 600 people from 76 countries who attended the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City in July 2008.

On July 19 – 22, 2009, Brown will photograph attendees of the 5th IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Cape Town, South Africa, and separately, clients and staff at two local HIV pediatric clinics. An exhibition of 40 life-sized black and white portraits taken in Mexico City will be on display at the Cape Town conference. The project will include videography at this year's IAS conference.

INFECTED & AFFECTED is a visual study of an HIV/AIDS global community on a mission, expressing its emotions, individually and together, in solidarity, reacting to the stigma that surrounds HIV/AIDS. Collectively, these portraits present to the world a mosaic of dignity and courage that challenges stigma.

Nearly 33 million people are living with HIV/AIDS worldwide. This pandemic has affected nearly every one of us alive today. When a community is stigmatized and discriminated against, it creates a sense of shame, isolation and fear, and it silences individuals. Stigma can be as deadly as the virus itself, hampering awareness and education.

For the *INFECTED & AFFECTED* project, photographer Joan L. Brown asks each of the participants to convey through physical gestures how she or he would fight, communicate love and express the emotions that surround the stigma of HIV/AIDS. It is the diverse responses from the participants and the intensity of the emotions that captivate the viewer. In each photograph, one sees the distinctive nature of the subject's clothing, ethnicity and gender, as well as his or her specific reactions to the questions being asked.

In addition to *POZ* and IAS, support has been generously provided by ANAC (Association of Nursing in AIDS Care), Hudson Yards, South African Airways Cargo, DB Schenker, NDK, Warren Nelson Creative and FAB Branding. Smart + Strong, the parent of *POZ* magazine, has contributed online services for the *INFECTED & AFFECTED* project.

For more information visit infectedandaffected.com or e-mail: info@infectedandaffected.com.

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