Infected & Affected

Portraits of a Community Combating Stigma

May 1, 2009

When a community is stigmatized, it creates a sense of shame, isolation and fear—it silences individuals. The stigma surrounding HIV/AIDS has proved to be as deadly as the disease itself, hampering awareness, education and prevention efforts, and creating a barrier to lifesaving care for people living with the virus.

INFECTED & AFFECTED: Portraits of a Community Combating Stigma is a visual study of the HIV/AIDS global community on a mission, expressing its emotions—individually and collectively—in reaction to HIV/AIDS stigma.

In 2008, photographer Joan L. Brown photographed nearly 600 people from 67 countries at the XVII International AIDS Conference in Mexico City. Her subjects were HIV positive and HIV negative.

Brown confined her subjects in a corner constructed from seamless paper. She asked each participant to convey, through physical gestures, how he or she would fight discrimination, communicate love and express sadness about the stigma that surrounds HIV/AIDS.

POZ has supported this HIV/AIDS stigma project from its inception. The project has been endorsed by the International AIDS Society (IAS) and will continue in 2009 at the fifth IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Cape Town and in 2010 at the XVIII International AIDS Conference in Vienna.

To view photos from Brown's work in Mexico City and quotes from participants, visit infectedandaffected.com.

The fifth IAS Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention will be held July 19 to 22 in Cape Town. Visit ias2009.org for more information. See you there!

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/portraits-HIV-stigma-16475-4501