

**THE MOST IMPORTANT PICTURE
AWARDED ASMP FOUNDATION GRANT**

Buffalo, New York photographer Brendan Bannon is one the latest recipients of a \$1,000 grant from the ASMP Foundation for his ambitious documentary project to create a global portrait of HIV/AIDS through the eyes of the children affected by the disease.

Bannon travels to areas heavily impacted by HIV, where he conducts workshops with afflicted teens to teach them basic photography skills and empower them to tell their stories. He works in partnership with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with a goal to spread this project to ten or more countries worldwide. Bannon began The Most Important Picture in 2003 while working on a project about deinstitutionalization in Romania, a country with the highest level of pediatric HIV in Europe. In 2004, he traveled to Africa, where he worked with children in Uganda. Bannon will return to Africa in late September 2005 to continue his work from a base in Nairobi, Kenya.

In the images and texts from this project, Bannon sees people who are surviving, in spite of the fear, misunderstanding and discrimination that surround their disease. "In our time it is an under-reported miracle that people face calamity and find a way to survive and sometimes even flourish," he explains. "If you talk to these kids, if you read their words and see their images, you will see people who are not angry and not consumed by fear."

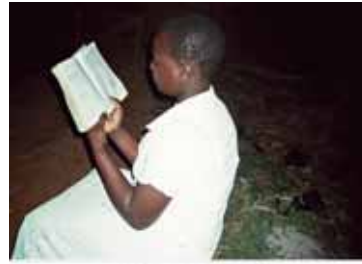
Work from the first chapter of The Most Important Picture received an unprecedented level of interest and support in an exhibition that has traveled from the CEPA Gallery in Buffalo, New York to venues in Georgetown, Kentucky, and Bucharest, Romania. A follow-up exhibition at the CEPA Gallery is currently being planned. Further details about the project can be viewed on the gallery Web site at <www.cepagallery.com/mip>.

ASMP Foundation Board President Dan Lamont recalls that Bannon's project stood out from a number of similar proposals submitted to the Foundation this spring due to the level of organization of Bannon's submission and his track record. Bannon had also successfully created a similar program in Romania and had used it as a way of raising awareness and encouraging both professional and public discourse.

"We received a lot of good project ideas with a similar emphasis on empowering youth by teaching them to express themselves through photography," says Lamont. "But among all these well intentioned programs, Bannon's stood out because it was extremely well planned and it reached out to a broad audience. When applying for an ASMP Foundation grant, it's important to look closely at our mission and to consider how the project will fit with this," he adds.

Grant applications are reviewed twice yearly by ASMP Foundation board members. The next application deadline is November 15, 2005. Applicants do not need to be ASMP members to be considered for a grant. Successful applications have all demonstrated the potential to help educate both ASMP members and the broader creative community of which they are a part.

For further guidelines about ASMP Foundation Grants and a downloadable application form visit this link: <http://www.asmp.org/foundation/grantguide.php>



I was really pleased with photos.
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I was really pleased with photos.



Here I thought...
After some time passed in my mind I was not so worried to picture that with a book.



I believe I can fly

I took it because I know one day, one time
I will fly and travel in some countries...
I also know that I can work hard in order
to get my goals. Even if my parent dead
I know I will fly through photography.

All Photos © The Most Important Picture

—JW

With the help of ASMP, Bannon will return to Africa to continue his work with children living with HIV/AIDS