

PEACETILES

Every day, 14,000 people contract HIV. Every minute of every day a child dies of AIDS. 15 million children around the world have been orphaned by AIDS, losing one or both parents to the disease.

From youthaids.org



A TRIUMPH OF THE SPIRIT

Exploring the “visual voice” of youth on HIV/AIDS

By Lars Hasselblad Torres

The *Triumph of Spirit* discussion guide is a companion to the growing collection of Peace Tiles being made by children, youth and adults who have been affected by the HIV/AIDS pandemic. These intimate works of art – vibrant collages produced during workshops held in a variety of settings – have been used in many ways: as personal mementos, exchanged with others, and exhibited in local and international mural installations.

The purpose of this guide is to present the works to a broad international audience in an easily accessible format that encour-

ages deeper exploration of the themes expressed, and to help individuals and groups discover their own ways to take action.

This guide offers a way for people to encounter and to explore messages about the impact of HIV and AIDS in the lives of youth around the world. I hope that, in some small way, the discussions inspired by this guide will positively influence the attitudes and behaviors of others – I hope that by engaging one another and the works of art contained in this guide people will be moved to take personal and group action to mitigate the effects of

AIDS – whether it is in your local community or a community in need somewhere in the world.

The idea for the discussion guide started early in the Winter of 2007 after seeing the Peace Tiles project (www.peacetiles.net) continue to grow around the world and my continued exposure to the uplifting messages young people were creating for each other. I came across the *Amazing Faith* discussion guide later in the year, on which the format of this guide is based, and the guide was born.

How To Use This Guide

This guide has been developed to enable participants to encounter the “visual voice” of children affected by HIV/AIDS. Through these personal and intimate works, I hope you will discover new dimensions, experiences, and interpretations of the global epidemic. During discussion I hope participants will hear stories that will spark, renew, or deepen a commitment to help “make AIDS history.”

In this guide you will find a series of 16 “cards” with Peace Tiles created in response to young people’s experiences with HIV/AIDS around the world. You should print these out in color (if possible) on heavy paper. Cut these out before your discussion begins.

Each card contains a Peace Tile image created by a young person somewhere in the world where AIDS has touched their lives. In addition to the image, each card contains two questions to get discussion going along with an internet reference for additional information. The cards address a range of issues, from positive self-imagery to the needs of people living with AIDS (PLWAs).

The “cards” contained in this guide are intended to provide a way for groups to focus their attention; the questions are “entry points” to get dialogue started when you gather. I hope these cards will inspire intimate and wide-ranging discussions that, ultimately, help your group find ways to take action on behalf of people at-risk or infected with HIV, the virus that causes AIDS.

Once you form your group, try to schedule follow-up meetings so you get to know each other better over time. Assign a group leader who speaks easily and listens well, who is able to maintain structure in the group and who can ask further good questions that draw upon participant reflections.

Here is a sample format for your time together:

1. **Ask for participants to introduce themselves.** Even if participants know one another, ask them to share something they think others might not know about them.
2. **Opening Reflection.** Invite participants to share a time when a work of art moved them. Have they ever seen a work of art about AIDS? Ask them to share it. If you’d like to use a conversation starter, pull a card from the deck and read it aloud.
3. **Start talking.** Have a participant pull a question from the *A Triumph of the Spirit* card deck and read the first question. Pass the card around and encourage each participant to offer an answer. Have the participant choose someone else to answer the second question and go around the group for answers also.
4. **Assimilation.** Invite participants to consider how they can take what they learned during the session and apply it in their own lives and in the world.
5. **Closing Reflection.** What were some of the most evocative tiles? Is there any action the group can take together? Will you meet again?

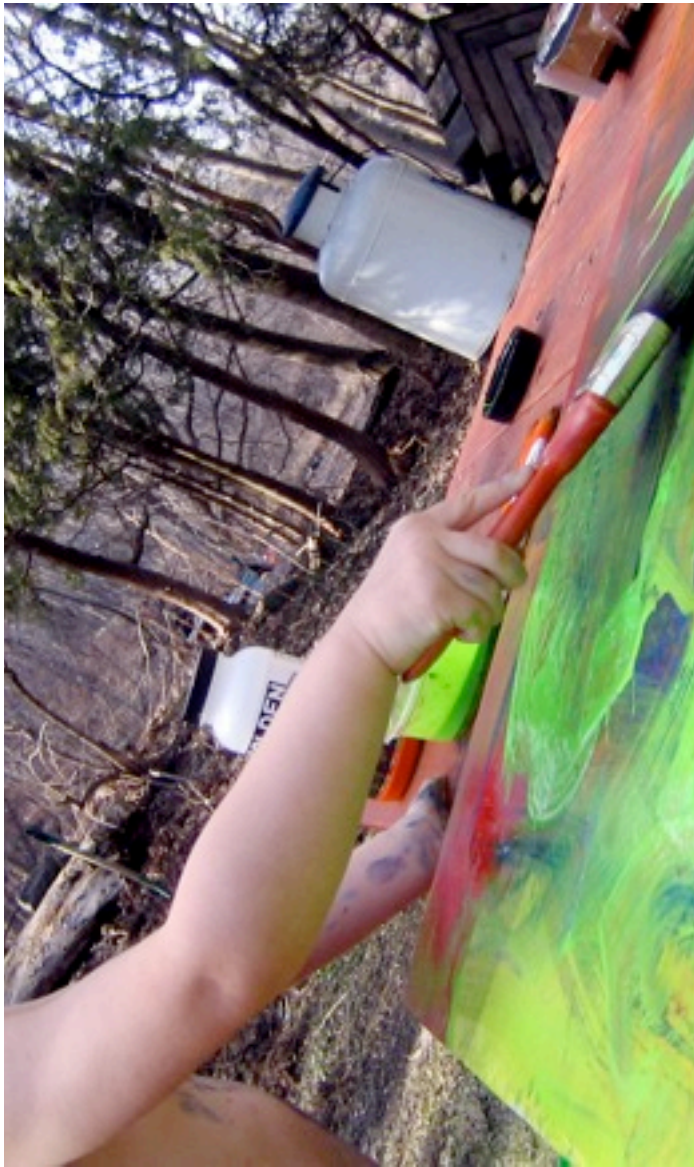
Sparking visual dialogue

Individual Peace Tiles created in workshops are combined with others to produce vivid murals that communicate the “visual voice” of children and draw the viewer into a global dialogue.

Right: Children in Rajasthan, India create Peace Tiles during a workshop sponsored by Gram Bharati Samiti

Far right: A youth in Johannesburg, South Africa regards tiles from around the world exhibited at the Bus Factory arts center.





TIPS FOR LEADING DISCUSSION

When leading your dialogue, be gentle, open, and fair. Encourage participation by each member but don't force anyone.

Make sure that each person who want to share has a chance to do so. If a participant takes too much time, respectfully intervene and ask him or her to hold their thought so it can be addressed during the assimilation portion of the discussion. Remind everyone that the goal is to allow everyone a chance to respond.

Expect some amazing moments. You may hear some very personal and moving stories.



Turn *A Triumph of the Spirit* Into Action Integrating the arts, dialogue and service

Here are some ideas to build upon the interpersonal connections and ideas generated during discussion. The aim is to inspire participants to identify new ways to contribute to the global campaign against HIV/AIDS.

- Introduce the Peace Tiles project and this discussion guide to educators and artists in your community.¹ This kit can serve as a starting point for a conversation about ways to involve them in awareness-raising and service - locally or globally.²
- Bring youth together in informal settings to discuss the impact of HIV/AIDS in their lives and what they know about the global dimensions of the pandemic. Introduce them to films like *A Closer Walk*³ to learn from first hand accounts of the epidemic. Visit sites like www.youthaids-aldo.org to learn more.
- Contact local businesses and social service organizations in your area to encourage them to partner in support of a community-wide service effort on World AIDS Day.

Thank you for using this discussion guide.

¹ Learn more about Peace Tiles at <http://www.peacetiles.net>

² Visit sites like <http://www.visualaids.org> and <http://www.artsaidsart.org> for artists resources

³ Visit <http://www.acloserwalk.org>

About the Global Peace Tiles Project

Peace Tiles workshop are dynamic learning spaces where participants create intimate works of art that, when combined, produce vibrant murals.

The Peace Tiles process is a wonderful classroom resource for teachers that integrates well into a range of learning goals across curriculum standards. These include:

- *Visual arts.* Collage, composition, and narrative are key elements of a Peace Tile.
- *Service learning.* Students can apply their creativity to problem-solving locally and globally.
- *Team building.* Intergroup communication and cooperation are at the center of the Peace Tiles process.
- *Social studies.* Raise awareness and facilitate connections across geography and culture.
- *Global issues.* Learn about issues experienced locally and their global dimensions.

Our Partners

A global arts network

As it has grown since 2005 the Global Peace Tiles Project has benefited from the contributions of its members around the world. Partner organizations represent an informal network of artists,



For more information:

Contact Lars Hasselblad Torres at 802-563-2757 or by email at peacetiles@mixedmedia.us or visit www.peacetiles.net



We had a session with teenagers and we were given a topic on home based testing, which is a new concept being introduced here. Nobody was willing to facilitate to this tender age with all sorts of question. So we introduced Peace Tiles to them and just told them, "Put what you fear in relation to HIV/AIDS on the tiles." It was an amazing workshop where they themselves started talking about what they fear and we directed the conversation to household testing and got the message through.

Dennis Kimambo, REPACTED, Kenya

The Global Peace Tiles Project offers a basic structure for integrating the visual arts into classroom learning in addition to the following resources:

- *International network.* A growing community of educators and artists in more than 20 countries looking to connect.

educators, and community-based social service providers dedicated to reducing the threat of HIV/AIDS and mitigating its impact on children and youth.

Partners in our World AIDS Day activities who have produced or exhibited Peace Tiles include:

- ActALIVE (United States and Kenya)*
- ACTWID/Kongdzem (Cameroon)*
- Amoration Studios (United States)*
- Armory Center for the Arts (United States)*
- Arts for Global Development, Inc.*
- Bill Clinton Cares (India)*
- Girl Child Art Foundation (Nigeria)*
- Girls Club of Dorchester, Massachusetts (United States)*
- Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Switzerland)*
- Gram Bharati Samiti (India)*
- Life in Africa Foundation (Uganda)*
- Life Home Project (Thailand)*
- Little Lambs (Kenya)*
- Mankind Artists Against AIDS (MAAA)*

- *Instructional guides.* Workshop design and issue-based discussion materials.
- *Videos.* Lively clips about Peace Tiles projects around the world.
- *Peace Tiles kits.* Individual and group kits that include colored wood tiles, collage materials, and instructions.

(Tanzania)

- Maitreya Universal Education Project (India)*
- Mosaic the City (Canada)*
- NextAID (United States and South Africa)*
- Nyumbani Home (Kenya)*
- Omidyar Network (www.omidyar.net/home)*
- Outside the Dream Foundation (Uganda)*
- Peace Corps Costa Rica*
- Policy Research Services (Nigeria)*
- Pretoria Art Museum (PAM) (South Africa)*
- Princeton Public Library (United States)*
- REPACTED (Kenya)*
- Salt Spring Organization for Life Improvement and Development (SOLID) (Canda)*
- Siam Cares (Thailand)*
- Synergie pour l'enfance (Senegal)*
- TakingITGlobal (www.takingitglobal.org)*
- Upper Peninsula Center for the Arts (United States)*
- Visual Voices (United States)*
- Visual Arts and Crafts Academy (VACA) (South Africa)*
- YMCA Dakar (Senegal)*

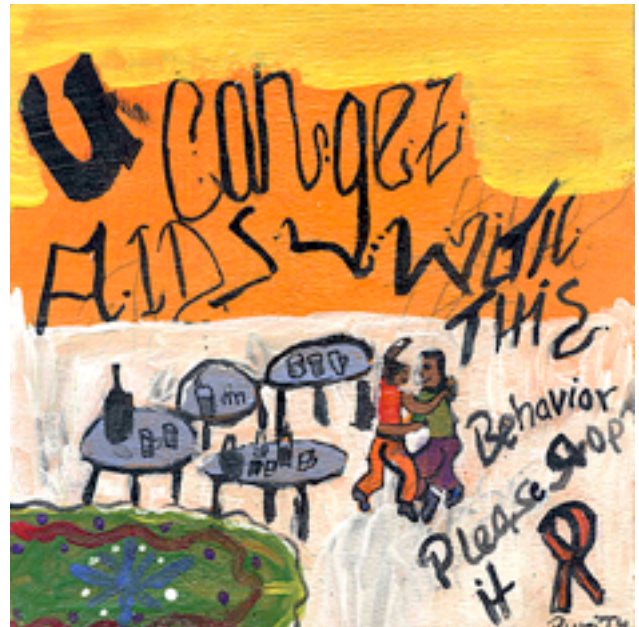


UNTITLED | *Synergie pour l'enfance, Senegal*

What things do you want to run away from? And to?
Do you think this is a hopeful image? Why or why not?

Learn more at:

<http://www.gmfc.org/index.php/gmc6/content/view/full/755>



U CAN GET AIDS | *Little Lambs, Kenya*

What kinds of risks have you taken in your life?
What is this artist trying to communicate about risk?

Learn more at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pubs/brochure/atrisk.htm>



MY SEX MY LIFE | *Gram Bharati Samiti, India*

What does this image say about girls in relation to AIDS?
Have you ever felt empowered? And disempowered? When?

Learn more at:

http://www.unicef.org/girlseducation/index_focus_aids.html



WORK AGAINST AIDS | *Outside the Dream, Uganda*

How do the images in this tile relate to the words?
How have you experienced loss in your life?

Learn more at:

<http://www.avert.org/aidsorphans.htm>



DONT FEAR TO BUY CONDOMS | *Mankind Artists Against AIDS, Tanzania*

Why is condom use important in the fight against AIDS?
Why might someone be afraid to purchase condoms?

Learn more at:

<http://www.fda.gov/oashi/aids/condom.html>



SIX VIRTUE | *Maitreya Universal Education Project, India*

Do you see a unifying theme in this tile? If so, what is it?
When have you felt vulnerable and had to trust someone?

Learn more at:

<http://www.thebody.com/content/art30896.html>



PEOPLE WITH AIDS NEED LOVE | *Maitreya Universal Education Project, India*

Why do you think the artist might have chosen this message?
When have you felt stigmatized?

Learn more at:

<http://www.avert.org/aidsstigma.htm>



PROTEGETE | *Peace Corps, Costa Rica*

What message do you think the artist is trying to convey?
What are some ways to prevent mother-to-child transmission?

Learn more at:

http://www.unicef.org/aids/index_preventionMTCT.html

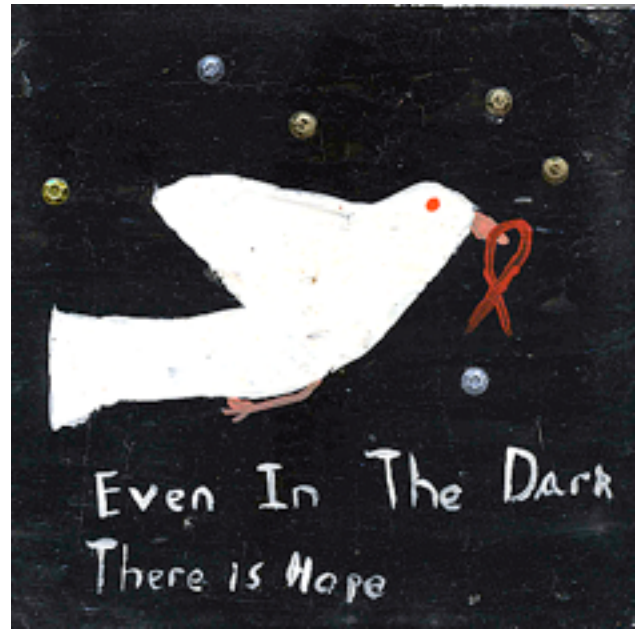


FOR YOU | *Life Home Project, Thailand*

What is the attitude suggested by this tile?
 What do you think the artist wants to share?

Learn more at:

<http://www.avert.org/teencondoms.htm>



THERE IS HOPE | *Life in Africa Foundation, Uganda*

What relationships do you see between AIDS and hope?
 What does darkness represent to you in this image?

Learn more at:

<http://www.who.int/hiv/photostories/en/index.html>



THERE IS PAIN | *Gram Bharati Samiti, India*

What is the message you see in this tile?
 In what ways might HIV/AIDS cause pain?

Learn more at:

<http://www.avert.org/aidsstigma.htm>



FREE AFRICA | *NextAID, South Africa*

How are AIDS, Africa and freedom interconnected?
 How does the artist use "found objects" to make their point?

Learn more at:

<http://www.avert.org/aidsstigma.htm>



BALANCED DIET | *Life Home Project, Thailand*

What is the relationship between food and good health?
Why is diet a concern for people living with HIV/AIDS?

Learn more at:

<http://old.thebody.com/nmai/nutrition.html>



SICK CHILDREN PLAY | *Synergie pour l'enfance, Senegal*

In what ways does this image communicate play?
What might limit HIV positive children's access to play?

Learn more at:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/health/1977757.stm>



SHARING CAN TRANSMIT | *Mankind Artists Against AIDS, Tanzania*

What things that can be shared can also transmit HIV?
Why do we share things, and what makes it hard to resist?

Learn more at:

<http://www.thebody.com/content/prev/art14134.html>



SUPPORT AIDS ORPHANS | *Outside the Dream, Uganda*

In what ways do you think warfare produces orphans?
How is an epidemic like AIDS exacerbated by warfare ?

Learn more at:

http://www.unicef.org/aids/index_armedconflict.html