



VISUAL
AIDS

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Visual AIDS asks “Where Did The Love Go?”

After over 20 years of AIDS activism, we must acknowledge the manner in which the pandemic has changed, and the ground we have gained. Yet we cannot forget how we got here, the battles that have been fought, and all the love and lovers we have lost.

With our current BroadSides project, **Visual AIDS** continues its mission of AIDS advocacy through visual arts. These broadsides are comprised of 4”x6” stickers, postcards, and downloadable 8 ½” x 11” posters, designed by four renowned artists: **Nayland Blake, Erik Hanson, Lou Laurita, and Nancer LeMoins**. For this commission, each artist was asked to offer their visual response to the question: “**Where Did the Love Go?**”

Many issues surrounding AIDS are no longer front-page news, but the statistics continue to rise. World wide, over 22 million people have died from AIDS. In the United States:

- An estimated one million people are currently living with HIV in the United States, with approximately 40,000 new infections occurring each year.
- 70% of these new infections occur in men and 30% occur in women.
- Men who have sex with men account for 43% of all new AIDS diagnoses.
- 75% of new infections in women are heterosexually transmitted.
- African Americans represent 12% of the US population, yet they account for 54% of new infections. Latinos represent 19% of AIDS diagnoses.
- Half of all new infections in the United States occur in people 25 years of age or younger.
- It is estimated that 1 in 4 Americans with HIV do not know they are infected.

WHERE DID THE PASSION GO? Remembering the fervor in a fight against a disease and the circumstances that devastating our community - we must not lose the love, respect, and care for each other, which we fought so hard to achieve. Where did the love for each other go? Are we still taking care of one another, looking beyond our individual needs to attain a broader communal response? Younger generation may be unaware of what love was lost, let alone and where it has gone.

WHERE DID THE CONDOMS GO? Safer sex and harm reduction have transformed from common ground to lost ground. The explicit and honest posters, bowls of free condoms, and those “very special” TV episodes have been replaced and moved. Is AIDS really passé? When did the silence of HIV on the down low surpass the noise of demonstrations? Instead of searching for a cure, many appear satisfied with prescribed cocktails, following a chaser of crystal and Viagra.

WHERE DID THE KISSES GO? Can we still celebrate our love and sexual freedom for each other, while respecting one another’s bodies and working for a larger well-being?

These questions and more were presented to the artists and now, are being aimed at our community. It is our hope that not only will this prompt people to ask ‘Where did the love go?’, but also ‘Where is the love **NOW?**’—so as to ensure that our love and lovers will be here for generations to come.

With the distribution of BroadSides, **Visual AIDS** aims to target diverse communities and a new generation in order to spread the crucial message that **AIDS IS NOT OVER**. Contact Visual AIDS for printed copies of the 4”x6” stickers and postcards while supplies last or download 8.5” x 11” pdf posters at www.visualAIDS.org

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Where Did The Love Go? - Artists & Organization Info

Nayland Blake is an artist, writer, and curator. He holds a BA from Bard College and an MFA from the California Institute of the Arts. He is currently Chair of the International Center of Photography–Bard Program in Advanced Photographic Studies. He has exhibited in numerous prestigious venues such as the Whitney Museum of Art, NYC; Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, MA; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, CA; and Seattle Museum of Art, WA. Blake was the co-curator of *In A Different Light*, the first major museum survey of the impact of gay, lesbian, and queer sensibilities on 20th-century art. He is represented by the Matthew Marks Gallery, NYC.

In response to the Broadsides project, Nayland says: "When I move down the streets I'm always aware of the fact that every inch of this city has at one point or another been the witness to births, breakups, protests and first loves. I think about the ways that particular spots are no longer "the corner store" but now "where Phil and I had that fight and we were both crying on the street". The sticker is a way for people to commemorate their love as well as a reminder to not give up, to keep making love visible and public."

Erik Hanson is primarily concerned with breaking down the dichotomy between the organic and inorganic, focusing his attention to listening to music and making visual records of this experience. He has exhibited his work extensively since 1993 in various locations including Paris, Buenos Aires, and New York City.

In response to the Broadsides project, Hanson says: "I thought of the phrase "Where Did The Love Go?" in more personal terms, where did "My" love go...thinking about a lover, the photographer Joe Caputo, that I lost to AIDS in '93, and how my storage bin of memories is as irrational as the names ascribed to paint colors, "Sweet Naiveté", "Spring Dust", "Serenity"... I was thinking about our desire to remember the intangible moments that make up a lifetime and how we index and classify these memories. I used the imagery of a paint chip for its indexical qualities and the poetics of naming the unnamable, a color, a love."

Lou Laurita is an artist and curator. He has exhibited in diverse locations including Speigler Gallery, Zurich, Switzerland; Spinello Gallery, FL; Guild & Greyshkul, NY; La Mama La Galleria, NY; and Spencer Brownstone Gallery, NY. Curatorial Projects *Advent*, South Florida Arts Center, FL and *Ache*, La Mama La Galleria, NY. He is represented by Guild & Greyshkul in New York.

In response to the Broadsides project, Laurita states: "Having lived through the ravages of the AIDS crisis in the 80's I remember how easy it was to put a face on the disease. Hundreds of our friends passing as we watched their bodies brutally succumbing to this virus. Everyone knew someone or knew someone who knew someone and an epidemic became defined by images of suffering. But in time medicines were available, the virus was controllable and that face became a memory. Many wished to forget the face. The face that forever altered the constructs of the gay community and impacted the world. A world that we don't think about that often. A world that we only connect to through images on the news or the internet. A world where millions are suffering from the disease that took our friends and lovers. So I found an image on the internet and decided to put a face on the disease again. A global face. The face of a young man that holds hope and promise, despite the fact that his body is skeletal, he is weak, and his death almost certain. And I painted it preciously for a precious soul looking into his eyes and wondering where did the love go? How could I have forgotten this face and how much I cared about those around me that were sick and died? And I thought, pay attention Lou, this is not fucking over and it won't be over until we never see that face again."

Nancer LeMoins is a printmaker based in San Francisco, whose works have directly addressed AIDS activism and her experience of living with HIV. She has participated in numerous exhibitions at diverse venues, including the Spin Gallery, Toronto, Canada; San Jose Museum of Modern Art, CA; San Francisco Arts Commission Gallery, CA; Space 743, CA; and Houska Gallery, MO. LeMoins states, "Art for me is the purest portrait of any time or event. I want very strongly to assure that this epidemic is understood and remembered as humans who lived through it, as their lives and pain, emotions and deaths, and not simply as statistics in a history book."

In response to the Broadsides project, LeMoins says: "I find that people with AIDS are more isolated now and don't reach out the way they used to. My image was someone lost in loneliness, bombarded by the storm of AIDS. I want people to see each other and help each other through the problems that AIDS causes. My friend Suzin died of AIDS alone in her apartment last December. I am slowly recovering from a 4 months hospitalization, and am fortunate to have a family and friends that love and support me. I wish everyone could have what I have."

Design by **John Chaich**. Chaich is a writer and designer living in New York. Previously, he created the *Art/Action/AIDS* campaign for the AIDS Task Force of Greater Cleveland, featuring Visual AIDS artist member Luna Luis Ortiz. These e-cards are available on Visual AIDS website. He has also written on artistic responses to AIDS for *Art & Understanding Magazine*.

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"Where Did The Love Go?" Is produced by **Visual AIDS**. Founded in 1988, as a response to AIDS and as a way of organizing the art world towards direct action, Visual AIDS has evolved a two-pronged mission. 1) Through the Frank Moore Archive Project, the largest slide library of work by artists living with HIV and the estates of artists who have died of AIDS, Visual AIDS historicizes artists' contributions while supporting their ability to continue making art and furthering their professional careers. 2) In collaboration with artists, institutions and organizations, Visual AIDS produces contemporary art exhibitions, publications, and events to spread the message "AIDS IS NOT OVER." www.visualAIDS.org

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