

# 2008/09 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships

## Honorable Mention



### SIYAKA TAYLOR LEWIS

Photography  
Freshman  
School of the Visual Arts

**I have always had a love of art.** My mom used to tell me I was a natural born artist. I didn't believe her until I got to high school. I was taking music classes and sketching classes, and I loved everything about art and all there was to learn about it. Everything squared itself in terms of art once I started taking photography. The first class I took was called Photo Projects. I thought it would be a breeze. What could possibly be so hard about pointing and shooting, I thought to myself. Not much I came to find out. The hard part was figuring out what I wanted to shoot, and how I was going to make my vision come to life through pictures.

My mother would also tell me that art is not just art. Photography, music, writing, and dance can all be used to help create social change. "Art for art's sake," she said, is not the point.



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the professional association for design

**SIYAKA TAYLOR LEWIS**

Photography

I grew up with the example of Gordon Parks, who used his art to reflect on society. I am doing the same as a student and will do the same as a professional.

I have been hired to work for the Harlem School of the Arts summer day camp, and this will be my first chance to work with youths, to teach them how art can reflect society and raise consciousness.

This work will help prepare me for becoming an excellent teacher within my own community, in addition to being an excellent artist.

One of my greatest photography accomplishments is a photo essay called “Welcome to Harlem Heights.” This is my first conceptual body of images. I took them because I wanted to capture the beauty in the ugliness. I wanted to capture the kind of lives and environment that poor African-American and Latino people have to deal with. In a while, I know that this neighborhood will be gentrified, and I wanted to create a memory of how it was and how the neighborhood and the people were neglected by the powers that be.

