

Summary:

POZITIF **Encounter with a reality in Mauritius**

Photographic documentary
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Altogether a testimony and an incentive to speak out about the HIV situation in Mauritius, POZITIF offers a collection of portraits and words from men and women living with HIV, and met on the island in December 2011.

The **POZITIF** project started germinating from a casual conversation ending with such a disillusioned reflection that the story could have ended there: "As long as the issue remains an abstract one, nothing will change ... because for most people, there is no problem."

This sentence has finally made its way to the idea that photography may have the power to raise awareness about a major health crisis. Every day around the world, pictures inform, testify and alert, reducing the distance between the misery of a neighbour and the one who would rather ignore it.

"If, through Photography, I could draw people's attention to a phenomenon that frightens us and on which we do not want to lay our eyes, then, I have to do it. Therefore, in December 2011, I went to meet people living with HIV in Mauritius, on a volunteer outreach work basis. Thus, the psychologist that I am, the social worker that I represent, the photographer that I like to be disappeared to turn me into the ally of that part of humanity stricken by AIDS and struggling to remain human through the eyes of others. I met people who had lost a lot, but nevertheless, accepted with courage and generosity to trust me by giving an account of their daily life to the "foreigner" that I was. From rants to cries from the heart, they voiced out their reality. A voice that they may have never been given before..."

Even though this is an extremely sensitive issue, this field work does not deliver a dark or desperate picture of AIDS, but a lucid and perceptive vision.

Giving a -positive- visibility to these men and women who we too often tend to reduce to a virus or a disease, this project would like to be the voice of the people who still nowadays, in Mauritius or elsewhere, have to deal with various issues beyond the complexities of their HIV status.

This work comes under a respectful and positive commitment, which leads us to challenge our personal convictions and our vision of AIDS. Hopefully, it can contribute to enable each of us to change our vision of AIDS, here and elsewhere, re-establishing the normality that we deny to those who bear the stigmas of HIV.

The fight against HIV is channelled by our way of seeing....or rather, our way of envisioning.

What if we all were a bit... **POZITIF**?