

February 4, 2010

Our City, Our Stories powered by Canon
Top Ten Winner Information – Artist Statements
The top ten winner's photo series' can be viewed at:
<http://www.flickr.com/photos/ourcityourstories/sets/>

Gabriella Abis – *The Odyssey of Play*

"I remember taking these photos on a warm afternoon in May. It was the first day that I received the camera from the Canon workshop at school. When I got home, my younger sister told me she was going to a park with a friend - a perfect opportunity to use the camera for the first time. In these photographs, part of what I've captured is two 12-year-olds in their own little world, running around in circles, chasing each other and playing. What I also believe this story conveys is a sense of happiness, friendship, and freedom. The people, and the memories we make in this city are truly what makes Toronto our home."

Veronica Brown – *No Man is Yet an Isle*

"The inspiration for the photo story that I created was transportation, something we all use every day in many different forms, whether it be a car, a bike, the TTC or even just our own two feet. With transportation we can connect one part of the city to the other through paths, whether literal or metaphorical. As we travel through our city, we are witness to neighbourhoods that gradually integrate into one another, bringing people and cultures together like no other city can."

Kevin Graham – *Dance with the Shadows*

"This photo series is a perfect example of something happening accidentally on purpose, if that makes sense. I was rushing to meet a deadline so I called over a friend and said, "let's just go shoot." As soon as I realized the potential of the story my mind went crazy with ideas. This is truly an artistic moment when dance and photography come together so well. The man in the last half of the series is Jason Cornwall, a close friend. Hopefully when you see these photos you sense his love for dance. The way the light hits him is not a coincidence because he truly was born to shine."

Maria Khan – *The Road to Home*

"*The Road to Home* is about a girl who's walking home after school and gets bullied along the way. After the encounter she continues towards home but is traumatized, feeling depressed, scared and alone. When she finally reaches home she cries, thinks about what happened and doesn't know what she'll do or how to stand up to her bully. The moral behind the story is that bullying hurts and that we should all be kind to one another even if some of us might not have a lot of friends or be considered to be "cool"."

William Kuan – *Tresvonne's Dynamic Personality*

"I was born and raised in Toronto. When I was creating this photo story, I was just trying to have fun. That's it. Every time I took a picture of my good friend Tresvonne Rose-Wilson, I never had any thoughts. I was just being myself and he was being himself. I took photos of Tresvonne doing the things that he likes to do. It's really amazing how he gives off such a bold statement without even using words. To be honest, I didn't realize I had a photo story. My instructor showed me I did. Thanks Nick!"

Jawad Mashuque – *City in Perpetual Motion*

“Motion is everywhere we look, resulting in the absorption and expulsion of massive amounts of energy. In essence, motion is a visualization of the energies all around us. That’s the major theme of my work: the visualization of the energies in our city. Our city is alive with movement and the exchange of energy. With my photos I hope to convey but a small sense of that. I always strive to capture something more than just colours and sights with my photos, because I think there’s always something more beneath the surface. And in Toronto there’s always something more.”

Kyle Minniti – *Our Impact*

“Throughout the course of one month I took several walks and drives in Toronto. On these trips I would always come across landscapes that depicted Toronto’s environmental problems. When I took these pictures I was amazed at how easy it was to find such a contrast between what could be and what is. What interests me is the mix of natural and man-made beauty in our city. I feel Toronto’s natural beauty is slowly decaying before our eyes and not enough is being done. Toronto has the potential to be a much more beautiful city than it is.”

Mapela Uhindu-Gingala – *These are the Fables of my City of Toronto*

“My name is Mapela and I love everything to do with the arts. My favourites are music, sketching, fashion, and photography. My photo story is about a girl going downtown sketching and not really focused on anything around her. What you see in the photos are different places in Toronto you might have seen before or been to. I also wanted to keep the photos real. Since you can’t see me taking the photo the sketch shows you who Mapela really is. I wanted to keep the viewer interested in the story and to relate to the setting downtown and my love for the arts.”

Zheng Wu - *Secret*

“My photo story focuses on same-sex relationships. To be honest, I had no interest in telling this story until we had a workshop about the LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) community at my school. The workshop speakers made me realize how badly LGBTQ people can be treated. This gave me the idea for my photo story. I captured the relationship between two female figures who were “more than just friends”. Toronto is known for its multiculturalism and openness to accept everyone, despite their differences. I hope my photo story conveys Toronto like a huge and understanding family, where everyone belongs.”

Hawa Yusuf - *Family*

“The story in these images shows who I trust most, who I love most and what I believe in. When I started taking photos of my family I didn’t really focus on one thing. I just wanted to show what my family does, what they’re like, the truth and character behind each face. I really love the picture of my family praying together. It stands out from the rest because it shows that though we do our own thing at home, we all come together as Muslims in front of God. My family was my inspiration, and I thank them for everything.”

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Media contacts:

Shane Gerard, Senior Promotions & Communications Coordinator,
Cluster A Communications Unit, 416-397-5711, sgerard@toronto.ca

Jessica Draker, High Road Communications, 416-644-2270, jdraker@highroad.com