

We Love USA

Category: visuals

written by Jonathan Giftos | November 11, 2016



Jonathan Giftos

About the artist:

"I work as a primary-care doctor at a clinic in the South Bronx. I believe it is part of my job, as a doctor, to advocate for my patients' health both inside the exam room and out on the streets. I have enjoyed taking photographs since I was a little kid. After a long hiatus, I reconnected with street photography in the fall of 2014 through the [Bronx Documentary Center](#). I particularly enjoy using photography to highlight the strength and beauty of a borough more often known by outsiders for its poverty and struggles. And I continue to see photography as both a creative outlet and as a tool for social change. I have been compiling my photos on a new website, [jonathangiftos.com](#), where prints are available in exchange for a donation to the Bronx Documentary Center."

About the artwork:

This photo was taken nearly ten years ago at a protest calling for comprehensive immigration reform.

Visual editor's note:

A picture is worth a thousand words, and sometimes it can help when we have no words. In the days following this contentious election I have found humility in the

words of those who have highlighted our collective failure to listen to each other. The fears of those who decided this election are as deeply felt as the fears of those of us who fear its consequences. This does not excuse bigotry or xenophobia, however, or mitigate their impact.

The past several months have been characterized by shouting from all corners and listening from very few. I propose that our failure—and my own failure—to listen to the legitimate grievances of those who feel left behind by our current economy may have precipitated the messages of intolerance that emerged from the deep grooves of implicit biases inherent in our society and, indeed, humanity.

Because Jonathon Giftos is a gifted observer of this humanity, I asked him to share a photograph relevant to this election. This photograph, and the words on the poster carried by its subject, remind me that our country is great—and that it is great because of our immigrants, not in spite of them. I hope that our president-elect, his advisors and our legislators can approach immigration reform with patience and compassion. Our nation's health, and that of our immigrants, depends on it.

Visuals editor:

Justin Sanders