

Annie Risemberg

I started photographing on 52nd Street in early 2010. I came to Bryn Mawr and Haverford from a low-income family and a diverse upbringing, and while I found the suburban community uncomfortable, I was drawn to the lively and open atmosphere I found on 52nd. I have since spent a lot of time there, both creating photographs and connecting personally with the area. This body of work is about the youth of that neighborhood, which is almost entirely African-American, and I have found is often overlooked by the surrounding wealth of the Main Line to the west and the University of Pennsylvania to the east. Being young, urban, and black, these people are also one of the most stereotyped groups in the United States. Some of the individuals depicted are people I only spoke to for a few minutes, and some are people I have known for a few years. I am interested in self-expression and self-representation, especially considering that our generation is intimately familiar with how to present themselves to a camera. Each photograph has a story behind its creation, whether it was a woman stopping me on the street and asking for a photograph as a favor or a young man deciding to be photographed in front of a mural of his late friend. I want the images to evince some sense of that story and of the individual that I knew or encountered.