

# 2007/08 Worldstudio AIGA Scholarships

## MTV Music Award

## Orit Mardkha-Tenzer Award



### CHARLENE MUSIC

Film  
Graduate Student  
Stanford University



**Seven years ago at Harvard**, I had the great fortune of studying under the late filmmaker Richard Rogers, whose support marked a new direction in my life. When I chose to document the life of Gerry McNamara, a homeless man I noticed in the subway, I did not know how much this experience would shape me. Gerry quickly became my friend and the familiar face of the hardships of living on the streets. My work with him transformed the way I viewed homelessness, the struggle to break out of poverty, and the people who faced this daily challenge. I came to care deeply about a social reality that had never before touched me. What I found most meaningful, however, was that through documentary I was able to share these strong feelings and lessons with others. I discovered a way to evoke in an audience the same reactions that I had found in myself.

My passion became portraying people and unveiling unobserved social situations. My projects involved the elderly, immigrants, and school janitors. As a fellow at the Mahatma Gandhi Hospital in India, I developed an audiovisual workshop aimed to uproot young boys' acceptance of domestic violence. Documentary allowed me to combine my desire to help others by giving them a voice with a field that is creative, challenging, and intellectually stimulating. I experienced first-hand the power and effectiveness of documentary in catalyzing reform and the significant impact I could have as its driving force. This affirmed in me the desire to pursue documentary filmmaking as my life's work.



I am particularly interested in the role of participatory documentary in social change. Empowering marginalized groups with access to media tools is integral to affect change at a grassroots level. My desire is to work with groups of socially disadvantaged people and equip them with the tools, knowledge, and skills that will give them freedom of expression. Documentary allows people to voice their own experiences, priorities, and recommendations for change. Given my Hispanic background, my ultimate goal is to focus on Latin America, and implement programs where documentary will be used to trigger social reform and political mobilization. My desire is to teach and inspire college students to enter the field and have an impact through this medium.



Worldstudio  
FOUNDATION



the professional association for design

## CHARLENE MUSIC

Film

I was overjoyed to be notified that I was one of only eight students admitted to Stanford's highly competitive MFA in Documentary Film and Video. Stanford's strict focus on documentary is fundamental to my education. The impact I want to have, the ambition of my ideas, and the issues I want to tackle require the best training available. If I am to influence policy at top levels, teach, and change people's lives, I must perfect my skills. Additionally, Stanford's emphasis on providing a strong theoretical framework complements my desire to teach at the university level.

My passion and responsibility is to make a significant contribution by giving people a voice through documentary. This scholarship will help fund my education and give me the essential transferable knowledge to help others make a difference in their own communities and lives. It will also help me to work in the developing world upon graduation by lightening the financial burden undertaken in the two years of the MFA. I know I have the drive, the heart, and the commitment to make the most out of this education. Most importantly, I know that after I complete Stanford's program I will be ready and equipped to make an important change in our world – and I will.

