

MEDIA RELEASE

CURIOUS IN EAST END FILM FESTIVAL

Curious (artists Helen Paris and Leslie Hill) will be screening their film, *(be)longing*, at the East End Film Festival, London this April. The film was shot in London in 2007 by the artists, who live and work in the East End.

(be)longing is a 10 minute documentary featuring a group of inspiring African teenagers who were brought illegally or trafficked into the UK and since overcome desperate situations to build new lives for themselves in London. Now in college, fluent in English, with dreams of going to university, the girls face deportation on their 18th birthdays under current Home Office rules. The film asks them what they long for and where they feel they belong.

The artists' say, "the film is a moving portrait of longing and belonging in London, with the girls telling their own stories in their own words. One million women and children are trafficked globally each year. Our governments have to do more to help individuals caught in the crossfire of human trafficking and immigration laws that punish the victims more than the perpetrators. Though the film is a short 10 minutes we hope it helps give a human face and voice to the thousands of people in the UK who find themselves in this limbo of longing to belong."

A preview took place at the Genesis Cinema, Mile End in April 2007 and was attended by representatives of the NSPCC and the Home Office, including the Minister of the Treasury.

Since the film was completed, we are delighted that the Home Office has begun working with the girls as consultants, and they have been granted leave to remain.

LISTINGS INFORMATION

East End Film Festival: April 17th-24th 2008

For the full programme call 020 7364 7917 or email eastend@towerhamlets.gov.uk
www.eastendfilmfestival.com

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PRESS ENQUIRIES

Samantha Scott or Cheryl Pierce at Artsadmin

020 7247 5102 or sam@artsadmin.co.uk / cheryl@artsadmin.co.uk

**TOYNBEE STUDIOS, 28 COMMERCIAL STREET
LONDON E1 6AB UNITED KINGDOM**

TELEPHONE **+44 (0)20 7247 5102** FAX **+44 (0)20 7247 5103** TEXTPHONE **+44 (0)20 7247 5182**
EMAIL **ADMIN@ARTSADMIN.CO.UK** WEBSITE **WWW.ARTSADMIN.CO.UK**

DIRECTORS STEPHEN AINGER, CHARLES GARRAD, SHREENA GHOSH, LEW HODGES, CHRIS HORSNELL, LOIS KEIDAN, ALISON RITCHIE, MHORA SAMUEL, EUGENE SKEEF, SEONAIID STEWART, SALLY STOTE, DAVID THORP. **REGISTERED OFFICE** HARBOTTLE AND LEWIS SOLICITORS, HANOVER HOUSE, 14 HANOVER SQUARE, LONDON, W1S 1HP. VAT REGISTRATION NO. 657086117. REGISTERED NO. 2979487. REG. CHARITY NO. 1044645

NOTES TO EDITORS

CURIOUS (Leslie Hill and Helen Paris) are artists working in performance, video and digital media known for their edgy, humorous interrogations of contemporary culture and politics, work that has been called “as smart as it is seductive”. As Curious, they have produced over 30 innovative works as well as collaborations with national and international artists. www.artsadmin.co.uk/curious

(be)longing was commissioned by The Women’s Library, London Metropolitan University and supported by Arts Council England, Awards For All, City Bridge Trust, the John S Cohen Foundation, Friends of the Women’s Library, Brunel University and SMARTLab Digital Media Institute, University of East London.

THE NSPCC (National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children) 'There to Here' is a support group of women and girls who were brought or trafficked to the UK as minors and sexually exploited. Under current Home Office law they are allowed to remain in the UK only until they turn 18 even if they have no living family in their country of origin. The directors worked with the 'There to Here' group for a year before shooting this film with them.

THE EAST END FILM FESTIVAL has been developing its support for filmmaking since its inception in 2001. The Festival began in Tower Hamlets out of a need to recognise the work of local filmmakers and to provide a platform for its exhibition. This included the films produced by the then Tower Hamlets Film Fund.