

# PRESS RELEASE

8 May 2012

EVENT           Exhibition & Art Competition 'Bedroom'  
PLACE           Halcyon Gallery, 24 Bruton St, Mayfair, W1J 6 QQ  
DATE            24 May, 2012  
TIME            6-8 pm

An exhibition 'Bedroom' will be on show at the Halcyon Gallery on May 24<sup>th</sup> to highlight the stark difference in lifestyles between children at the polar ends of London's economic divide. More than 130 works by young entrants to a competition at The Harrodian School in Barnes, London SW13, will be exhibited at the Mayfair Gallery as part of a fundraising exercise for the Kids Company, a London charity working with under-privileged children. The exhibition will be judged by a group of Directors and art critics from leading Auction Houses in London.

The project was conceived by Reza Beyad, Chair of Governors at The Harrodian, when he visited the Kid's Company last year to see the groundbreaking exhibition called 'Shoebox Living'. The children had been given a shoebox in which to create their bedrooms. The exercise brought to the fore the abject poverty of children in one of the world's wealthiest capitals. It also raised issues surrounding the United Nations Children's Act of 1989 and resulted in child protection interventions for six of the children. The charity currently has a waiting list of 200 children who have no bed to sleep in and, with the continuing economic downturn; many more will be identified as requiring help this year.

The Harrodian School has been supporting the Kids Company for almost five years and inspired by the 'Shoebox Living' display Mr Beyad pledged to raise £100,000 to help the children's charity even further. He said he was not only keen to highlight to Londoners the plight of these children but also to show how complacent and oblivious many of us are to the deprivation and suffering in our streets. Using the trappings of privilege he hopes to raise awareness to the plight of children supported by the Kids Company and to raise enough money to help the children. He and Dr Andrew Parmley, Head of Senior School at the Harrodian, are jointly hosting two events to help raise enough funds to pay for beds and other necessities for the Kids Company.

An Art Competition titled 'Bedroom' was launched at the school last summer and the title is a reminder of how two groups of children, living in the same city, have such starkly different lifestyles. In September there will be a fundraising dinner at Mansion House to help raise the £100,000 that the charity needs, to help the children they are supporting.

Reza reminds us that "in the year that London is hosting the 2012 Olympics as well as the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, it's a shameful indictment that we have such squalid misery amongst the children of this great city. Founder of the Kids Company, Camilla Batmanghelidj said, "The poorest children in London don't have a voice and we have a collective responsibility to make sure that every child in London always has enough to eat and a warm and comfortable place to sleep. This is a basic human need and a basic human right. And it is something we as a society can solve, if we want to."

## NOTES TO EDITORS:

Kids Company

<http://www.kidsco.org.uk>

The Harrodian School

<http://www.harrodian.com>

Halcyon Gallery

<http://www.halcyongallery.com>

### **Kids Company**

Founded in 1996 by Camila Batmanghelidjh, Kids Company provides wraparound care for 17,000 vulnerable and disadvantaged children and young people up to the age of 24. Many have experienced severe or multiple trauma, or are surviving 'alone,' living in chronic deprivation with little or no adult support. Often the bare essential are a daily struggle: 84 per cent are homeless; 39 per cent are young carers trying to cope; 83 per cent have experienced sustained, complex trauma during childhood.

Kids Company provides direct support with emotional, practical, educational and therapeutic services through centres in Camberwell, Southwark and Kilburn, and across 40 schools in the capital. It also runs a comprehensive outreach programme.

An essential part of Kids Company work involves the use of the arts therapeutically, educationally and vocationally. For children who are too young or disturbed to speak about their anxiety the arts can be a powerful communication and assessment tool.

In processing their life experiences through painting, sculpture, textiles, pottery, drama, music, poetry and film the children and young people have produced incredibly moving and powerful work. These have been exhibited, sold and performed in major galleries across London, including the Royal Academy of Arts, the Tate Modern, the National Theatre Studio, the Haunch of Venison, The Saatchi Gallery, and in Selfridges.

In 2010 some of the UK's leading contemporary artists worked with young people on the Shoebox Living exhibition at the Haunch of Venison, supported by the Bryan Adams Foundation.

For the 'Shoebox Living' project the children were asked to recreate a room from their childhood home and give a short description. One boy described how while he lay on the floor, he watched his baby brother sleep, to make sure he didn't roll out of bed.

Another said how upset he was that his 'annoying' brother and sister had been threatening him with a knife. The result was a fascinating insight into the lives of children in Britain and a rallying call to everyone in society to honour their responsibility to children by keeping them safe and affording them dignity.

### **The Harrodian School**

The Harrodian School at the opposite side of the socio-economic pendulum of London is based in 25 acres of plush prime land in Barnes, SW London, The Harrodian has a reputation of attracting the rich and famous; but in spite of a huge number of celebrity parents, you never get an impression of a vulgar exhibition of wealth or status as you walk round the school. Instead, you see children from perhaps as many countries as those represented in the United Nations; all friendly, extremely well-mannered and polite. And most of all you see a bunch of happy children. It is no wonder that the Harrodian Ofsted report states that “the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is outstanding.”

But the other outstanding aspect of the school is its commitment to the community – local, national and indeed international. Its sense of philanthropy and desire to help the disadvantaged amongst us can be seen clearly from the range of school activities undertaken to promote and instil a sense of citizenship and selflessness.

### **Halcyon Gallery**

The gallery deals in rare masterpieces ranging in period from Impressionism to Pop. Every artist represented by Halcyon Gallery is chosen for their raw talent, the resonance of their ideas and the emotional response their work generates.

On May 24<sup>th</sup> there will also be a unique opportunity to view some of Mauro Perucchetti's latest creations, paintings by Bob Dylan, an installation by Dale Chihuly featuring new glass sculptures created especially for the Halcyon, including two stunning new Chandeliers.

*For further information, texts and high-resolution images contact Shirley Joseph on phone 07506 506 791 or email [shirleyjoseph\\_rizvi@hotmail.com](mailto:shirleyjoseph_rizvi@hotmail.com)*