



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**On Exhibit at the United Nations, South Gallery  
THE HOUSE IS SMALL BUT THE WELCOME IS BIG  
Photographs By and About African Women and Children Affected by HIV/AIDS**

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**Web:** [www.thehouseissmall.org](http://www.thehouseissmall.org) | Photos available for print or online upon request

**October 19, 2009, New York, New York**—UNAIDS, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, is hosting Los Angeles-based Venice Arts' project *The House Is Small But The Welcome Is Big*, an exhibit of over 40 extraordinary photographs shot by South African women living with HIV and Mozambican children who lost both parents to AIDS.

The exhibit sheds light on the hopes and aspirations of people affected by the epidemic, as well as the discrimination and stigma associated with HIV/AIDS. "HIV is about everyone. It is not about 'us versus them'. There is no 'them' – only 'us', together," says United Nations–Secretary General, Ban Ki-Moon.

A reception (by invitation only) for the exhibit will be held on Tuesday, November 17<sup>th</sup>, 2009 from 6pm–7:30pm with several guest speakers including Emmy-nominated writer/executive producer of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, Neal Baer, M.D., also a project co-founder. The reception is being co-sponsored by UNAIDS, Venice Arts, and the stars of *Law & Order: SVU* including Christopher Meloni, Mariska Hargitay, Dann Florek, Richard Belzer, Ice-T, Stephanie March, BD Wong and Tamara Tunie.

The exhibit, accompanied by biographical panels, tells the uncensored stories of 15 women and 18 children who face tremendous challenges because of HIV/AIDS. The photos are tragic and hopeful, lively and compelling. Some are difficult to look at. All of them are hard to dismiss.

The name of the project comes from one of the photographs taken by 28 year-old Funeka Nceke of Cape Town. On the wall of her friend's home hangs an embroidered cloth that reads, "The House Is Small But the Welcome Is Big." Funeka lives in a shack with no electricity or running water with her two children and two additional family members. Funeka learned she was HIV-positive in 2003.

"These women and children have a lot to say through these images about living on their own and raising younger siblings by themselves," says Baer. "That's the harsh truth about AIDS in Africa. Millions of children are growing up alone, a generation without the guidance or love of parents."

One beautiful photograph is titled, "My Memories" and is a pair of hands gently touching old black and white photographs. "Photographs of my parents are displayed, which show their past. I show everyone my parents [when they were] alive through these photos, which is a joy for me," says Joaquim Macamo, the 16 year-old photographer. Macamo lost both of his parents to AIDS in 2001 and lives with his 20 year-old sister.

(more)

The exhibit has been featured at venues around the world, including New York, NY; Los Angeles, Oakland, and Palo Alto, CA; Boston, MA; Colorado Springs and Denver, CO; Tallahassee, FL; Maputo, Mozambique; Toronto, Canada; Mexico City, Mexico; and Paris, France.

### **About Venice Arts**

*The House Is Small* is a project of the award-winning Venice Arts, a Los Angeles-based nonprofit organization running innovative programs in documentary photography, filmmaking, and digital media/arts since 1993. The organization also implements regional, national and international participant-produced photo documentary projects with adults and children, and co-directors the Institute for Photographic Empowerment in collaboration with the University of Southern California (USC) Annenberg Center for Communication Leadership.

### **About UNAIDS**

UNAIDS is an innovative joint venture of the United Nations, bringing together the efforts and resources of the UNAIDS Secretariat and ten UN system organizations to respond to AIDS. The Secretariat headquarters is in Geneva, Switzerland with staff on the ground in more than 80 countries. Coherent action on AIDS by the UN system is coordinated in countries through the UN theme groups, and the joint programmes on AIDS. Cosponsors include UNHCR, UNICEF, WFP, UNDP, UNFPA, UNODC, ILO, UNESCO, WHO and the World Bank. Visit the UNAIDS Web site at [www.unaids.org](http://www.unaids.org).

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