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CHILDREN ORPHANED BY AIDS DOCUMENT THEIR WORLD ***Venice Arts Returns to Africa, for Project in Mozambique with AIDS Orphans***

July 18, 2007—*The House is Small but the Welcome is Big*, is a two-year photo documentary project telling a story of HIV/AIDS and its impact on African women and children. Launched last year in Cape Town, South Africa with 15 women—moms and moms-to-be—living with HIV/AIDS, it continues this August when a team of photographers and filmmakers from the Los Angeles-based Venice Arts travel to Maputo, Mozambique to teach 15 children orphaned by AIDS, and now raising their younger siblings on their own, how to tell the story of their lives through the lens of a camera. Their images, will be used to raise awareness, educate others, and help erode the stigma of HIV/AIDS.

The first exhibit, from Cape Town, met with great success, traveling to ten venues, thus far, including major Universities (Stanford, Harvard, UCLA) and the International AIDS Conference (Toronto). It was also featured during the keynote of First Lady Laura Bush at the Clinton Global Aid Initiative Conference (New York, 2006).

Unique this year, photos, audio, video, and blogs will be uploaded to a specially designed, interactive website (www.thehouseissmall.org), regularly allowing the interested public to watch the project as it unfolds, as well as share their comments about the images and stories with participating youth. Once the youths' exhibit is compiled in the fall, the photographs will traveled throughout the provinces of Mozambique by a youth advocacy organization partnering on the project; it will also be showcased throughout the U.S. and internationally by Venice Arts.

This phase of the project was developed in response to an appeal made by Mozambican President Guebuza and First Lady Maria da Luz Guebuza to bring about sustainable solutions to deal with the overwhelming number of children orphaned by AIDS in Mozambique; now numbered at over half a million. It is being conducted in collaboration with, and through the support of the African Millennium Foundation and UNICEF, along with several Mozambican nonprofit organizations. According to Lynn Warshafsky, Venice Arts' Executive Director, "We feel very fortunate to have been invited by the African Millennium Foundation to come to Mozambique and to support the efforts of Mozambicans to use cutting edge and innovative methods, such as documentary photography and film created by youth, to educate and inform their communities." Jim Hubbard, Venice Arts' Creative Director, adds, "Our work with Mozambican youth, and our growing international work, generally, provides a dynamic contrast to the work that we do with local youth, who also live economically disadvantaged lives.

Regardless of where we work, or who we work with, we are strongly committed to the value of giving people the opportunity to tell their own stories through the lens of a camera, and to promoting their stories through exhibits, books, and media exposure.”

The House is Small was conceived by Venice Arts executive director and creative director, Lynn Warshafsky and Jim Hubbard, and board member Neal Baer, a physician and the executive producer and show runner for *Law & Order: SVU*. It is supported by Dick Wolf/Wolf Films through NBC/Universal, the African Millennium Foundation, UNICEF, the Entertainment to Empowerment Foundation, the Kaiser Family Foundation, Paradigm, Canon, Inc., Universal Framing, and numerous individual donors. It is the first in a series of international projects planned by Venice Arts to raise awareness about global health issues and will be exhibited this fall in Los Angeles at the USC Annenberg School of Communications, in conjunction with the launch of Venice Arts’ and the Annenberg School’s new Institute for Photographic Empowerment, as well as at the Venice Arts Gallery, before traveling nationally and internationally.

For 13 years, Venice Arts has been running innovative programs in photography, film, and digital arts, primarily for low-income youth. It has implemented national and international photo documentary projects since 1998. For more about Venice Arts: <http://www.venice-arts.org>

For more information, photos, or an interview with Jim Hubbard or Neal Baer, contact colleen@hypeworld.com or jim@venice-arts.org or 310-822-8533. For bios on Baer, Hubbard, and Warshafsky, please go to: <http://www.venice-arts.org/about/staff.html>. To receive notifications when *The House is Small* website is updated, please sign-up for our e-newsletter at www.venice-arts.org or bookmark www.thehouseis-small.org.

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