

## **AUTOGRAPH ABP AWARDED £660,500 TO CREATE “MISSING CHAPTER” OF BRITISH PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY**

**30 April 2008:** Autograph ABP ([www.autograph-abp.co.uk](http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk)), one of the UK’s leading photographic agencies, has been awarded £660,500 by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) to preserve the history of culturally diverse Britain through photography.

The award comes as Autograph ABP celebrates its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The international charitable agency was founded in 1988 to address a lack of representation of photographers from culturally diverse backgrounds. The HLF grant enables it to realise its long-term objective of creating a publicly accessible photographic archive which documents the emergence of post-war Britain as a multicultural society.

In October 2007, Autograph ABP launched Rivington Place, a groundbreaking contemporary visual arts building in Shoreditch, giving the agency a dedicated exhibition space for the first time. It will now house the Archive and Research Centre for Culturally Diverse Photography which will be accessible to the public from the autumn of 2010. This modern collection of key historical photographs will range in genre from vernacular and high street studio portraits through to social documentary and fine art photography. It will transform the way Britain’s cultural identity is represented, challenging established stereotypes and highlight what Mark Sealy, Director of Autograph ABP, calls the “missing chapter” in Britain’s photographic history.

### **‘The Missing Chapter – Cultural Identity and the Photographic Archive’**

**21 May 2008, 18.30 – 20.30 at Rivington Place.**

To mark the successful HLF grant, Autograph ABP is hosting a panel discussion to debate some of the issues raised by both the archive and Autograph ABP’s 20 year work representing cultural identity through photographic images.

**Chair:** Renee Mussai, *Archive Project Manager*

**Speakers:** **Professor Stuart Hall, Mark Sealy, Joy Gregory, Roshini Kempadoo**

Since 1988, Autograph ABP has worked with photographers including Armet Francis, Horace Ové, Ingrid Pollard, Sunil Gupta, Roshini Kempadoo, Joy Gregory, Franklyn Rodgers, Dave Lewis, Jagtar Semplay, Eileen Perrier and Anthony Lam to commission, exhibit and publish work which will now become part of the archive. The earliest work in the archive comes from the

1950s and the first generation of “Windrush” settlers. It will continue its work with artists whose work engages with issues of cultural identity to ensure their work is archived and preserved for the future.

**Professor Stuart Hall, Chair of Autograph, said:** *‘Autograph has led the way in supporting and showing the work of photographic artists from different cultural backgrounds working in the UK or internationally. This pioneering work in the culturally diverse photographic arts now constitutes an unrivalled “living archive” and an essential part of our national cultural heritage which has unique value. It deserves to be much more widely known and used.’*

**Mark Sealy, Director, Autograph ABP, said:** *“The HLF grant enables us to build on our 20 year history of working with photographers and artists and to create a permanent testament to the crucial contribution their work has made to the cultural life of Britain. The missing chapter will finally be filled.”*

**Sue Bowers, Heritage Lottery Fund Manager in London, said:** *‘Many of the photographs in this fantastic collection are currently at risk and need to be properly stored and preserved to secure their future. This funding will ensure that they are saved for decades to come, as well as opening up the images to thousands more people by making them available online.’*

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For further press information including high resolution images, please contact:

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Archive Project Manager, Autograph ABP

**About the Panel Speakers**

**Professor Stuart Hall** is Emeritus Professor of Sociology the Open University, and widely regarded as one of the world’s leading cultural theorists. He has lectured extensively worldwide since the late 1960s and has written many influential essays on social theory, cultural and media studies, race, racism and ethnicity, national identity, cultural difference and representation, globalisation and visual culture. He is also Chairman of Autograph ABP.

**Mark Sealy**, Director of Autograph ABP since 1991, Mark has initiated numerous international photography exhibitions, including an audiovisual programme for *Rencontres Arles* and retrospectives on the photographic works of Gordon Parks and James Van Der Zee. He is the author of over 30 books and monographs including *Different* (co-authored with Stuart Hall, Phaidon Press, 2001) – a key survey of contemporary black photographers worldwide. He has recently co-curated *Bangladesh 1971* at Rivington Place, and is currently working on the forthcoming Hayward touring exhibition and publication *Disposable People: Contemporary Global Slavery*. In 2007, he was awarded the Royal Photographic Society's *Hood Medal*.

**Joy Gregory** is an internationally exhibiting artist. Born in England to parents of Jamaican origin, her work has been influenced by a combination of race, gender and aesthetics. Gregory has exhibited internationally, including in Cape Town, South Africa where she first showed her series *Lost Histories*, reflecting on colonization and its effects on culture and self-image. Her work is featured in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London; Institute of Modern Art, Brisbane, Australia; Yale University, New Haven, and Government Art Collection, UK. She has recently appeared as a mentor in Channel4's *Picture This* series. She lives and works in London.

**Roshini Kempadoo** is a London based digital artist, critic, and Reader in Media Practice at the School of Social Sciences, Media and Cultural Studies, University of East London. Her research and artwork is concerned with re-interpretations of historical and contemporary material of the Caribbean and Britain. Recent exhibitions include the retrospective exhibition *Roshini Kempadoo work: 1990 – 2004* and *Art & Emancipation In Jamaica: Isaac Mendes Belisario And His Worlds*, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, USA. She has recently completed her PhD thesis on 'The Creole in the Archive' at Goldsmiths College, University of London.

#### **Notes to Editors**

The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, HLF grants open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. Since 1994 it has supported more than 26,000 projects, allocating over £4 billion across the UK. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

Autograph ABP is an international photographic arts agency that addresses issues of cultural identity and human rights. We develop, exhibit and publish the work of photographers from culturally diverse backgrounds and advocate their inclusion in all areas of exhibition, publishing, education and commerce in the visual arts.

[www.autograph-abp.co.uk](http://www.autograph-abp.co.uk).

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