

Artangel

Press Release

Towards a Promised Land, Part 2

Wendy Ewald

From 20 May 2005



For a child to leave home - whether it's walking out of Afghanistan or moving from Wales with a family to make a fresh start - is a transforming experience. I hope to understand what it's like to make the epic moves they've made, and to acknowledge that they are truly among us.

Wendy Ewald

In July 2005 Artangel launched *Towards a Promised Land*, Wendy Ewald's large-scale banner photographs of children newly arrived in Margate. The fifteen black and white portraits are displayed along Margate's Sea Wall, some of the faces looking out to sea, others facing inland towards the town.

From 20 May 2006 the Sea Wall banners will be joined by the second and final phase of *Towards a Promised Land* with banner photographs hung around the centre of Margate. Photographs of Uryi, Gareth, Glenn, Celeste, Gemma, Christian, Omar and Marianne from London, Derby, Belfast, Iraq, Germany, Belarus, Egypt and the Congo will be shown in the Dreamland funfair, Margate Library, and on the walls of a cinema, a pub, a fish and chip shop and a domestic home...

Ewald has taken portraits of the children in locations of their choosing around Margate as well as photographs of their possessions, selected from belongings brought with them to Margate. The possessions evoke homes and lives left behind from Northern Ireland to Africa.

Towards a Promised Land is a project commissioned and produced by Artangel, in collaboration with Creative Partnerships, Kent/Arts Council England and supported by the Small Voice Foundation, involving twenty-two children and young people who arrived on the Isle of Thanet from both near and far. They come from places often affected by war, poverty or political unrest, some simply from changes in domestic circumstances. Working with Wendy Ewald, the children have learned, through photography, to explore and understand their worlds and express different experiences of relocation and the search for a better life.

Towards a Promised Land has taken Wendy Ewald two years to develop during which time she has interviewed and photographed the children as well as teaching them how to use a camera. These images will be displayed with documentation about the development of the project and other earlier work by Ewald in Margate Library from 20 May 2006.

For more than twenty-five years, Wendy Ewald has taught photography to children and young people around the world, encouraging her students to become photographers and working as a "translator" of their images, Ewald's long-standing commitment to helping children realise the worth of their own visions has gained her international recognition and numerous awards.

This final phase of *Towards a Promised Land* also marks the launch of *The Margate Exodus*, filmmaker Penny Woolcock's live event and Channel 4 film inspired by the Old Testament Book of Exodus, a story of identity and great movements of peoples across borders in search of a 'Promised Land'. Written and directed by Woolcock, *The Margate Exodus* is a contemporary re-telling of the Exodus story with the residents of Margate playing all the parts in a series of promenade events throughout the town from 30 September – 1 October 2006. On 20 May *The Margate Exodus* HQ will open on Margate High Street. The HQ will act as an information centre for the people of Margate and a place where they can discover how to get involved in the project. www.themargateexodus.org.uk will be launched at the beginning of May.

A 192pp hardback publication with colour and black & white pages, *Towards a Promised Land, a book of fragments* will be available to coincide with *The Margate Exodus* weekend in September.

For further information and images contact Janette Scott on 020 7713 1400 or email js@artangel.org.uk

Notes to Editors

1. Born in Detroit, Michigan, Wendy Ewald attended Antioch College and Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where she studied photography with Minor White. Currently, she is a Senior Research Associate at the Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University and Project Director of the Literacy through Photography program.

Wendy Ewald lectures internationally and has been the recipient of numerous awards, including Fulbright and MacArthur Fellowships, several National Endowment for the Arts grants, and the Lila Wallace Reader's Digest Visual Arts Fellowship for South Africa.

2. *Towards a Promised Land* is funded by the Small Voice Foundation and Creative Partnerships. Artangel is supported by Arts Council England, London; The Company of Angels and the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. Wendy Ewald's *Towards a Promised Land* is an Artangel Interaction project. Artangel Interaction projects are led by artists working with participants who are often marginalised or overlooked by mainstream culture.

3. The first phase of banners can be seen along Margate Sea Wall between Palm Bay and Margate Harbour and included the children Ashlea, Rabbie, Ali Reza, Uryi and Zaakiyah.

4. Artangel has pioneered new ways of collaborating with artists and engaging audiences in an ambitious series of new commissions since the early 1990s. By producing exceptional new work in challenging contexts, Artangel has been at the forefront of cultural debate, both in the UK and abroad.

5. Creative Partnerships is a programme managed by Arts Council England, the national development agency for the arts in England. It gives young people in 36 disadvantaged areas across England the opportunity to develop their creativity and their ambition by building partnerships between schools and creative organisations, businesses and individuals. Creative Partnerships aims to demonstrate the pivotal role creativity and creative people can play in transforming education in every curriculum subject for children of all ages and abilities. For more information, visit: www.creative-partnerships.com For press enquiries about Creative Partnerships please call Rick Behari on 020 7973 6890 or email rick.behari@artscouncil.org.uk