

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

30 April 2008: Autograph ABP (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 20th 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.

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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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

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

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