

## Mediabox funded projects in 2008

Two innovative new projects were granted funding from Mediabox in the South East region during the Summer. A Mid Mediabox grant was awarded to Kent Refugee Action Network, and a Big award went to Creative Junction.

### Home to Home

Kent Refugee Action Network applied to deliver a series of animation workshops to 20 young unaccompanied asylum seekers at their Riverside Youth Centre in Canterbury. The creative partner on the project was Dan Richards, of Animate and Create who gained the trust of this vulnerable group of young people and succeeded in drawing out their most creative abilities during the course of the fortnight. The project has gained local acclaim and resulted in the production of four quality animation shorts that were showcased at a launch event in September.



Kent is home to a large number of teenage asylum seekers who have no family in the UK. These young people are ordinary teenagers with extraordinary pressures and worries. 'Home to Home' gave the young animators a safe and non-judgmental environment in which to express themselves. By using animation the young people were able to tell the stories of their lives anonymously, this is particularly important for them as some have sensitive asylum applications being considered at the moment.

The four films illustrate different aspects of the journey of a young person to the UK, reflections of life in Afghanistan and finding safety in another country, a light hearted look at cultural differences, and the story of three rabbits and their plight to escape the hunter – a clever twist on the concept of seeking asylum. The animations feature original and translated voices of the young people and mixture of plasticine, 2D and origami techniques.



The public event that took place to launch the animation films was a great success. The young people welcomed the Lord Mayor, members of Kent Police, youth workers, and peers from local schools showing how proud they had become of their animation projects. This was testament to their new found confidence as members of the community. For some of the guests it was the first time that they have had the opportunity to meet and hear from a young asylum seeker in his/her own words. The result was a very powerful event.

The films are available to view on You Tube at

[http://uk.youtube.com/results?search\\_query=home+to+home%2C+animate+and+create&search\\_type=&aq=f](http://uk.youtube.com/results?search_query=home+to+home%2C+animate+and+create&search_type=&aq=f) and are called Coming to England, Our Country, Kamran's Story and Small Rabbits.

## **Media Mash Up**

Creative Junction and media specialist partners (including Resource Productions) are currently working across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Milton Keynes to deliver four separate Mash Up projects. As a Big Mediabox project, final pieces of work will be launched at the end of November.

This ambitious project is engaging young people from very diverse backgrounds and providing them with the opportunity to try their hands at film, print, radio and mixed media techniques. In Oxfordshire the Youth Arts partnership is working with Creative Junction to provide a programme for disadvantaged young people including those living in sheltered accommodation. The group are using mixed media including a photo and sound installation to explore their own choices of themes and issues.

In Milton Keynes the project is working with the Young Asylum Support Team with young people who want to make a film about what life is like as an asylum seeker in care in the UK. They want other young people and those considering coming to the UK to see their work.

In Buckinghamshire a group from a pupil referral unit who have been excluded from school are using a mixture of photography and print to introduce a fun element into their issues based work about sports and the Paralympics. Teachers have expressed a keen interest in seeing their work and the young people are looking forward to inviting their family friends and peers to share their achievements at the launch event.

Finally, in Berkshire the Bracknell Forest Voluntary Action Group is supporting Creative Junction to work with a group of young carers to make a radio broadcast. When the group was first asked what they thought people would think of their work, their first reaction was to say that 'people don't understand what we do', they feel that there is not enough awareness in the community that young carers exist and so their main aim is to create increased awareness through their project. They hope that the work will make a difference and promote understanding of their responsibilities and challenges of being a young carer.

**The results of the second round of Mediabox funding for 2008 will be announced on November 14<sup>th</sup>. Keep an eye on the Screen South website to find out more about the projects that are funded in the South East region.**

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