



Shai Lah Productions :: Documenting Life

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Children of Genocide

invisible heroes of Humanity's most atrocious acts

a proposed feature documentary

Directed, Produced and Written by:
Award Winning Documentary Filmmaker
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Synopsis

Children are the most vulnerable of our society and the only hope we really have for the future. Child survivors of Genocide have a special gift for what ever left from Humanity / the rest of the world. This documentary series will discover the new hope through the eyes of Children of Genocides.

It seems like a Millennia past since the Holocaust, but only during the past decade the world has witnessed so many new Genocides.

The director does not focus on the causes of the most horrific of human atrocities but at their -- mostly overlooked -- positive outcomes.

The documentary will look at the struggle to survive, to heal, to reconcile and to create a better future; all through the eyes of kids who survived the killings and may be now young adults contributing to the society in a unique and special way.

Development Stage

The documentary is based on daring rare new footage to be taken in Darfur, Cambodia, Rwanda and southern Sudan (possibly also in the Balkans, Armenia & Israel).

Parts of the documentary will be based on extensive exclusive footage taken during the past decade by the director, a former Israeli television journalist, in post-war Cambodia, in southern Sudan and in Rwanda during the genocide and ten visits to the region since.

Target audience

General public, adolescents and adults.



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Frederick's Story

I met 19-year-old Frederick Ndabaramiye in Rwanda in 2001. He was sheltering at Rosamond Halsey Carr's Imbabazi Orphanage in Gisenyi, just by the border with the Congo (former Zaire).

I was struck by his two stumps instead of hands. I was used to such brutality in images coming from Sierra Leone, not Rwanda.

In our interview I was shocked to learn that Fredrick had only three years of education and can't find his place, unassisted, in the classroom.

The next sentence through, surprised me even more. The boy was far away from giving up on his independence and success in life.

He studies English. He is taking an active part in the amazing photographic project "Through the Eyes of Children" and Madam Carr is already trying to arrange for his operation and possible prosthesis in the US.

But above all, Fredrick was already an accomplished artist. He showed me with much deserved pride his latest creation, a lovely detailed and colourful drawing of the orphanage's flower garden.

"I want to draw, be a photographer, and be able to be independent," Frederick said.

Rose Carr was thrilled too. She shared with me her agonizing tireless efforts to convince the US Embassy in Kigali to let Fredrick have his entry visa.

In the fall of 2002, Frederick landed in Columbus, Ohio, where local doctors and companies donated their efforts to help him get a new pair of prosthetic hands.

"The first thing I did when I got my new fingers was grab a pencil. It was like a dream," he remembers.

After three more months he was back in Rwanda, able to care for himself and with great hopes and plans for his future.

Fredrick talks openly about his ordeal and brutal attack by the Interahamwe, the same thugs that lead the pack during the 1994 Rwandan Genocide.

When they hijacked the bus he was riding on near Gisenyi, Fredrick refused their demand to kill fellow passengers. His mutilated body was to become a warning to the Rwandan government and people who refuse to cooperate with the genociders.

Instead, Fredrick's free spirit and pure bravery is now a symbol for freedom, independence and strength to all those who encounter him.