ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY IS A GROUP OF ARTISTS COMMITTED TO PREVENTING HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, SAVING LIVES AND PROMOTING A GREATER UNDERSTANDING OF UNIVERSAL HUMAN RIGHTS.

MONTHLY BULLETIN

VOLUME IV

SEPTEMBER 2002

*Welcome to the **Artists for Amnesty Monthly Bulletin**, which will keep you informed about critical human rights issues, cases of individuals at risk, and the life-saving work of Amnesty International. Our Monthly Bulletin will also highlight the efforts of artists on behalf of human rights.*

SEPTEMBER 11, 2002

One year after the atrocious attacks of September 11, 2001, Amnesty International pays tribute to the victims and expresses its sorrow and outrage over these horrendous human rights crimes. As an organization that works on behalf of victims, Amnesty International remembers all those who were killed or injured in New York, Virginia and Pennsylvania on that fateful day. Among the approximately 3,000 victims were people of diverse religions, homelands, occupations and political beliefs, yet their shared tragedy will unite them in our hearts and minds forever. Some were our loved ones; some our friends; some our colleagues; some were strangers. No matter who they were, what they believed, or where they were when they died, each was the victim of a terrible human rights violation.

Amnesty International considers the September 11th attacks to be crimes against humanity under international law and has called for the perpetrators to be brought to justice, for without accountability human rights pledges become hollow rhetoric.

Amnesty International believes the best way to prevent human rights violations is to protect human rights values; respect for human rights can lessen the hatred that leads to violence. Since 1961, Amnesty International activists have worked for the day when all individuals enjoy full respect for their most basic human rights. As the millions who were touched mourn the thousands who died, Amnesty International USA reiterates its commitment to making that day a reality.

BLOODY SUNDAY

January 30, 1972, Bloody Sunday, in the minds of many, marks the beginning of the modern conflict in Ireland. On that day, politician Ivan Cooper tried to lead a peaceful march through the city of Derry, protesting the strict manner in which Britain was governing Ireland. During the march, British troops fired on unarmed civilians, killing 13 of them. Witness testimony contradicts the official findings of the government-sponsored investigation committee, which, in the first few months following the tragedy, cleared the British Army of any wrongdoing.

Writer/director **PAUL GREENGRASS** examines the controversial events of the day in his film, ***BLOODY SUNDAY,*** distributed by **PARAMOUNT CLASSICS**. Based on the book *Eyewitness Bloody Sunday,* by Don Mullan, the critically acclaimed *Bloody Sunday* was the winner of the Golden Berlin Bear, top prize at the Berlin International Film Festival, and the Best Film Audience Award at the Sundance Film Festival. Opens in theaters October 11.

ON THE FRONTLINES

Comic book artist **JOE SACCO** and actress **MIA KIRSHNER** will leave September 26 on a six-day journey to the Russian republic of Ingushetia to document the lives of women and children refugees from neighboring Chechnya. Using photography, comic book and video art and writings by the women and children, the two hope to draw attention to the plight of the over 150,000 refugees living in camps in the region. Clothes and other items have been collected by students in the Los Angeles area to send to the refugees. The *Lomographic Society* is sponsoring the project, providing photographic support. This trip is the first of seven. Ms. Kirshner plans to compile all of the material collected into a book about the lives of refugee women and children with proceeds to benefit Amnesty International. *Adbusters* magazine will be contributing art direction for the book.

JULIA DEAN is a photographer and director of the project: ***Child Labor and the Global Village: Photography for Social Change.*** The project will bring together in-depth photo essays from eleven photographers that capture the complexities of the issue, the injustices, possible solutions, and the humanitarian effort involved in bringing about change. To learn more about this project visit: **www.childlaborphotoproject.org** or call **310.821.0909.**

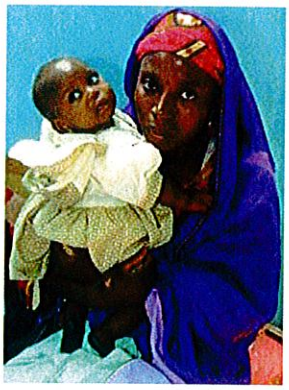
Child Soldiers in Burundi
Photograph by Clarence Williams

Writer and director **JOHN CARLOS FREY** will soon be screening his controversial independent film ***THE GATEKEEPER,*** in association with Amnesty International, The National Association of Latino Independent Producers (NALIP) and the Center for Human Rights and Constitutional Law. This award winning film explores the underbelly of the U.S. Mexican Border and details the harrowing stories that cost so many immigrants their lives. *Please see the back page for details about the screening.*

"My only hope is that freedom becomes a human right, not simply a territorial one." - John Carlos Frey

GET UP, STAND UP

SENTENCED TO DEATH BY STONING



Amnesty International is gravely concerned at the decision last month by a Shari'ah court of appeals in Funtua, Katsina State, Nigeria, to uphold the sentence of death by stoning imposed on AMINA LAWAL (right with daughter), a young Nigerian woman accused of giving birth to a child out of wedlock. Lawal and her lawyer have been granted 30 days to appeal the decision. With such a limited amount of time for action, Amnesty International is strongly urging its members and the public at large to participate in planned actions directed to the U.S. House of Representatives and to Nigeria's secular government in Abuja, which in the past has deemed the Shari'ah penal code unconstitutional.

Lawal was originally sentenced to death on March 22, 2002, after confessing to sexual relations with a man other than her husband (adultery is a crime punishable by death under Quranic-based Shari'ah law currently applicable to Nigeria's majority Muslim northern states). While charges against the alleged father of the child have been dropped, the religious court of appeals yesterday stood firm on Lawal's death sentence despite international protests.

The Nigerian constitution guarantees the right to life and to freedom from torture and cruel inhuman and degrading punishments and the right to fair trial. Nigeria is also a state party to the Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman and Degrading Treatment or Punishment and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The ICCPR protects the right to life, and, in countries which have not abolished the death penalty, assures that sentences of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes. The death penalty is "not to be imposed for non-violent acts such as... sexual relations between consenting adults." (Commission on Human Rights Resolution 2002/77, paragraph 4cc)

TAKE ACTION

Ambassador Jibril Muhammad Aminu
Embassy of Nigeria
1333 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036 FAX: 202.986.8449

CORRECTION FROM LAST MONTH:
Thank you to all of you who took part in our action opposing the sentence of rape in Punjab Province, Pakistan. The fax number we provided was incorrect . The correct fax number is:

011 92 42 200077

FROM TORTURE TO TRUTH

Sister Dianna Ortiz, a survivor of torture in Guatemala, has written a memoir of her experience to illustrate the reality of the practice of torture. "The damage torture does can never be undone. If I survived for any reason, it is to say that," she writes in *The Blindfold's Eyes: My Journey from Torture to Truth (written with Patricia Davis, Orbis Books, October 2002).* Sister Ortiz is an Ursuline nun who now directs the Torture Abolition and Survivors Support Coalition in Washington, D.C.

In November 1989, Sister Ortiz was abducted by security forces while working as a missionary among indigenous people in Guatemala. For twenty-four hours, she was gang-raped, burned with cigarettes, and suspended over a pit filled with the bodies of men, women and children who had been murdered. Her captors murdered a woman in front of her, and forced her to put her hand around the knife they used as they plunged it in. The scene was videotaped in order to blackmail her later.

Sister Ortiz's new book presents her story of faith, friendship, and the resolve to show that, at the core of the human spirit, there is a force stronger than violence and more powerful than fear.

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL Salt Lake City

UPCOMING EVENTS

September 27-29. See www.amnestyusa.org/filmfest .

BLOODY SUNDAY Special Screening Early October
For Updated information: 310.815.0450

THE GATEKEEPER OCT. 9 7:00PM Los Angeles Film School
6363 W. Sunset Blvd. (between Vine and Ivar) Los Angeles
For more information: 310.815.0450

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

UNMATCHED POWER, UNMET PRINCIPLES: The Human Rights Dimensions of U.S. Training of Foreign Military and Police Forces. The United States government now trains at least 100,000 foreign police and soldiers from more than 150 countries each year. Rwanda, Indonesia, and Colombia are examples of the devastating impact such training can have when used to commit widespread human rights violations. This report makes an in-depth analysis of this problem, and offers recommendations for change.

For copies of this report contact Bonnie Abaunza (see below)

JOIN ARTISTS FOR AMNESTY

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