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## 04.27.11 – Venice Arts Gallery Offers Free Screening of the Award-Winning Film: Home is Where You Find It.

**April 27th, 2011 - Venice, Ca**

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"I was so happy when they gave me a video camera...to have the opportunity to tell the world [about] life in Mozambique and orphan children."

— Alcides Soares, age 16, director of *Home Is Where You Find It*

On April 27, 2011, at 7 pm, the Venice Arts Gallery will offer a free screening of the award-winning documentary *Home Is Where You Find It*. This documentary short by Mozambican teenager Alcides Soares, age 16, about finding home and family after losing both parents to AIDS offers a personal lens into this global health crisis. The film has won numerous awards, including Best Documentary, Manhattan Short Film Festival; Best Documentary Short, DocuWest; first place Directorial Discovery Award, Rhode Island International Film Festival; and Best in Fest and Dan Eldon Activist Award, My Hero Short Film Festival.

As part of Venice Arts' documentary program, **The House Is Small but the Welcome Is Big**, Emmy-nominated writer/executive producer of *Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, Neal Baer, and movie director Chris Zalla gave Alcides a movie camera and taught him how to shoot. The result is a moving chronicle directed by Alcides himself. His journey to find a family and make a new life in a country that has been ravaged by AIDS is a story repeated millions of times everyday throughout Africa. As Alcides's story unfolds, we meet the orphans of Reencontro, an organization in Maputo that provides these children with bare sustenance. "We gave these children professional digital cameras, taught them the basics of how to use them and provided a little encouragement. What emerged is a glimpse of what life is like day-to-day when you're an AIDS orphan," says Lynn Warshafsky, co-founder of Venice Arts and *The House is Small but the Welcome is Big* documentary program. Their pictures—sometimes tragic, often hopeful and always honest—appear throughout *Home is Where You Find It* as a reminder that these children's voices must be heard.

"These children, as young as 10 and no older than 18, have a lot to say through these images about living on their own and raising younger siblings by themselves," says Baer. "That's the harsh truth about AIDS in Africa. Millions of children are growing up alone, a generation without the guidance or love of parents." In telling his story, Alcides finds an elderly woman to live with and, unexpectedly, is reunited with his younger brother whom he hasn't seen in ten years. AIDS tears families apart, but the resilience of children like Alcides can make new families out of tragedy. The film is co-produced by Venice Arts and ByKids.

This film screening is the concluding public program accompanying the exhibition **Picturing Health: Photographs by Youth Across Southern & Central California, on view through April 30th**. The exhibition features beautiful and compelling documentary photography by teenagers from eight regional communities. Their images tell stories of challenge: teen pregnancy; foreclosures; gangs; uncollected trash; limited access to fresh foods and, in the Central Valley, clean drinking water. And of strength: women in Southern Kern who walk the parks to keep them safe; youth clubs and community centers that provide a safe place for kids after-school; a new health clinic in Coachella; and the farmer's market in Merced.

The 50 images in this exhibit represent only a small selection of hundreds of photographs from Venice Arts' project **Picturing Health** which, in 2009 and 2010, taught documentary photography

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