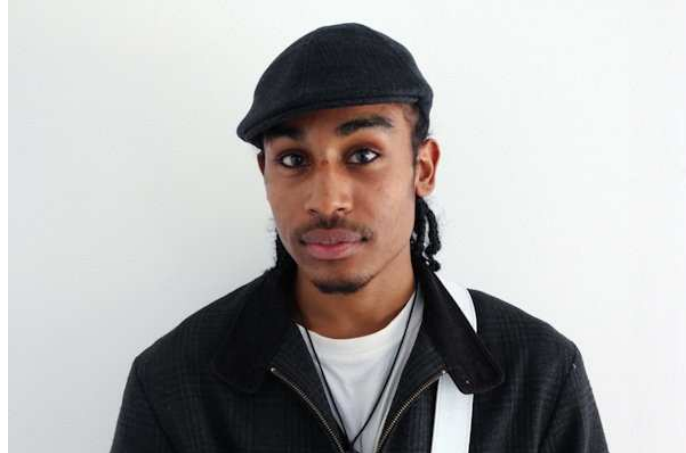


**NEWS RELEASE**  
**October 31, 2011**

## **Student film-maker wins United Nations awards by 'Breaking into the Museum'**



**Chris Lamontagne**, a 20 year old student from Westminster is celebrating after news that he has won two prestigious awards at the **PLURAL+ Youth Video Festival**, an international festival with awards established by the **United Nations Alliance of Civilizations (UNAOC)**.

Chris's short film, '**Black to Yellow**' has been awarded the '**Plural + Roots & Routes Award**' and the '**Plural+ Scalabrini International Network Award**'. Chris will travel to New York City in November, to receive his prizes at the Paley Centre for Media on 10 November, thanks to funding from the **Open Society Foundations**, and will document his experience on film.

'Black to Yellow' was conceived, written and directed by Chris, who also appears in the film, during his participation in '**Breaking into the Museum**' a creative trans-national initiative devised and led by **Manifesta**. The project took place at the **Museum of London** in June 2010, with support from the **Octavia Foundation** and **St Charles College** and funding from the **Heritage Lottery Fund**.

The three minute film is a spoken word performance, set against footage and experiences from Chris's visit to the Museum of London as part of 'Breaking into the Museum', focusing on one of the museum's exhibits – '**Charles Booth's Descriptive Map of London Poverty, 1889**'. You can watch the film [here](#).

*Chris said: 'When I heard that I had won these awards, it was a massive shock. At first I didn't understand how my video could have so much impact, it was after hearing the comments from friends and family that I realised how powerful this video was.'*

*It gave me a voice to express myself to a wider world to show undercover sociological aspects in western countries. It inspires me and gives me more confidence on reaching for success in life'.*

The **PLURAL+ Video Festival** was launched to explore themes related to migration, integration, inclusivity and diversity. The festival is an empowering platform for young people across the world to speak out about what they think of these issues.

**Breaking into the Museum** promotes innovative intervention in heritage-curating as an exciting form of 21<sup>st</sup> century cultural activism and engagement, using the medium of film/video grounded in an intensive learning and production workshop experience. The project has already taken place in London and in France, with Tribudom and city museum Musée Carnavalet (Paris) with funding from the European Cultural Foundation and the Mairie de Paris; additional European cities have expressed an interest in taking part.

These awards follow previous PLURAL+ recognition of films produced by **Manifesta**, in 2009, as part of the BELONGING initiative.

## //ENDS

For more information on the project, high resolution images, to arrange interviews and filming please contact: Manifesta, Marion Vargaftig on 020 8892 8504 / 07733 151 271 [marion@manifesta.org.uk](mailto:marion@manifesta.org.uk) or Octavia Foundation, Sarah Thomas on 020 8354 5664 / 07931 307 596 [sarah.thomas@octaviahousing.org.uk](mailto:sarah.thomas@octaviahousing.org.uk)

Chris will be in London available for interview before travelling to New York from 2 – 8 November. Museum of London is the preferred interview location.

The film is available to view online here: <http://bit.ly/qiggyx>



## Notes to Editors

1. **PLURAL +** is a project done in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and many partners from around the world. PLURAL+ provides young people with an effective platform to express themselves on key migration and diversity issues as well as **inclusiveness, identity, human rights and social cohesion**. PLURAL + supports this by ensuring that youth are engaged in these important issues both at local and global levels by mainstreaming their voices through a variety of media platforms and distribution networks (broadcast, video festivals, conferences, events, Internet, DVD) around the world. PLURAL+ entrants share their thoughts, struggles and fears about their identity as youth as well as migrants. This project reinforces the belief of the UNAOC and the IOM that youth are indeed powerful and creative agents of social change. [www.unaoc.org/pluralplus](http://www.unaoc.org/pluralplus)

2. **Breaking into the Museum** in London is produced by Manifesta with the Museum of London, and delivery partners Octavia Foundation and St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College. It is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Breaking into the Museum's transnational element is funded by the European Cultural Foundation and the Mairie de Paris. The lessons plans deriving from the project are written and co-produced by TrueTube. [www.manifesta.org.uk/breakingintothemuseum.html](http://www.manifesta.org.uk/breakingintothemuseum.html)

3. **Manifesta** is a not-for-profit limited company which develops and delivers arts and cultural projects for social change. The key themes on which it works are cultural diversity, social exclusion/inclusion and anti-racism. It was founded by Colin Prescod and Marion Vargaftig, following a collaboration dating from 1996. Manifesta's core aim is to facilitate creative expression of marginalised and youth voices (including migrants) on key issues, in order to express young people's ideas and perspectives, and put them 'centre stage' - using traditional exhibition sites as well as more unusual public spaces to reach the widest possible audience mix, and to provoke refreshed discourses on key current social and cultural affairs. In the last 4 years, concentrating on creative video/film narratives (delivered in projects themed around belonging, and history and heritage) we have workshop-produced more than 100 short films of broadcast quality, which have been seen in the UK and internationally - in museums and community centres, in the courtyard of an housing estate, on European television (broadcast and online), at international festivals and conferences. [www.manifesta.org.uk](http://www.manifesta.org.uk)

4. **The Octavia Foundation** is a charity set up by **Octavia Housing** which aims to improve the quality of life of local communities and individuals within the areas that Octavia Housing operates. Octavia Housing is a Housing association which manages 4,000 homes in central and West London. The Octavia Foundation work is divided into 5 key areas: training and employment initiatives; training and employment initiatives; young people and children; welfare and debt advice, older and vulnerable people, and community involvement. [www.octaviafoundation.org.uk](http://www.octaviafoundation.org.uk)

5. **The Museum of London** is one of the world's largest urban history museums and cares for over two million objects in its collection. Having undergone major redevelopment work for its Capital City project from 2010, the Museum takes its story from prehistoric London to the 21st century for the very first time. London is one of the most vibrant and cosmopolitan cities in the world with a story stretching back over a quarter of a million years. Museum of London is committed to recording and explaining change in every part of London life, to tell its past, present and future stories. Museum of London, Museum of Docklands and Museum of London Archaeology seek to inspire a passion for London. The Museums are open daily 10am – 6pm and are FREE to all. [www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English](http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English)

6. **The Open Society Foundations** Active in more than 70 countries, the Open Society Foundations work to build vibrant and tolerant democracies whose governments are accountable to their citizens. Working with local communities, the Open Society Foundations support justice and human rights, freedom of expression, and access to public health and education. [www.soros.org](http://www.soros.org)

7. **St Charles Catholic Sixth Form College** is a Roman Catholic sixth form college located close to Ladbrooke Grove in the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, in Central London. The college offers a range of courses for students aged 16-19 graduating from local schools in the surrounding area. Media Studies offer students a unique opportunity to engage in a wide range of media production projects and theoretical adventures with the explicit aim of encouraging and training a new generation of media literate, critically engaged and politically active media producers, researchers and artists. [www.stcharles.ac.uk/home.aspx](http://www.stcharles.ac.uk/home.aspx)

8. **The Heritage Lottery Fund** .Using money raised through the National Lottery, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage for present and future generations to take part in, learn from and enjoy. From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, we invest in every part of our diverse heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects allocating £4.7billion across the UK. [www.hlf.org.uk](http://www.hlf.org.uk)

9. **The European Cultural Foundation** facilitates and catalyses cultural exchange and new forms of creative expression. It shares and connects knowledge across the European cultural sector and advocate for the arts on all levels of political decision-making. [www.eurocult.org](http://www.eurocult.org)

10. **TrueTube** is a free, award winning education site for schools with video, lesson plans and assembly plans for Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Religious Education (RE) and Citizenship at key stage 3 and 4. The site currently receives more than one million hits per month across 130 countries. [www.truetube.co.uk](http://www.truetube.co.uk)