



## Cultural Industries Development Agency

# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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### **Creative Practitioners offer support and guidance to local students**

Supported by Creative Week Newspaper and with thanks to Tower Hamlets College

Tower Hamlets students met local creative practitioners and businesses last week at a special event run by the Cultural Industries Development Agency. Creative Arts students at Tower Hamlets College were asked to think about their needs and ambitions and the opportunities and support that might help them to reach their future goals.

The event on the 19 March 2003 consisted of three separate sessions (Media, Art & Design and Creative Computing) where local artists, designers and film-makers from a variety of backgrounds and creative disciplines spoke to the students about their experiences and the lessons they learnt along the way. Each of the sessions also included a panel discussion where students were given the opportunity to ask questions and debate relevant issues.

All speakers agreed that networking was one of the most important things in the creative industries. Whether it be in fine art or the music industry, graphic design or film, it was important to have the personality to get on with people and to have the self-belief to push ideas forward. Volunteering and work placements were an ideal opportunity to get to know the right people, learn the way in which the industry works and make oneself heard.

Speakers also advised students that when they were working on projects it was important to keep focused on how they would develop their work in the future. Keeping 'fingers in many pies' helped to increase knowledge and it was important to have a back up plan.

In response to questions relating to how much money you could earn in the creative industries, speakers pointed out that the rewards of working in the sector were not always financial – and that few people made money in the early years. Knowing that your work would enrich the life of others often provided the motivation for pursuing a creative career.

It is hoped that the event will help to give students the confidence to consider Creative careers while signposting them to the key issues they may face in their future careers.

Speakers included Dr Tom Fleming, Cultural Industries Development Officer, CIDA, Dhiraj Mahey of Primal Pictures, Emma Calder of Pearly Oyster, Brigitte Engl of Creative Week Newspaper, Alice Sharp of SPACE studios, Andrew Ekins and Illur Islandus of Limehouse Arts Foundation, Danny Brooks and Natasha Zlobec of Phage Design Ltd, Richard Wigley of M2C Media and Colin Kirk-Patrick of New Media Knowledge.

**The Leaside Creative Industries Initiative (LCII)** was a creative industries development project, which was run between 2001-2003 by the Cultural Industries Development Agency (CIDA) and funded by Leaside Regeneration. It provided business support, networking, information and advice to organisations, businesses and individuals who lived or worked in the Leaside SRB6 area, developed new projects, and raised the profile of creative activity in Leaside. A copy of the Leaside Arts and Creative Industries Strategy – an important outcome from the project is available from CIDA.

**For more information, contact Helena Joyce, CIDA PR and Events Co-ordinator, on: t. 020 7247 4710 / f. 020 7247 7852 / e. [helena@cida.co.uk](mailto:helena@cida.co.uk)**

