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## **Emma Skeldon**

### **“UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS”**

12<sup>th</sup> August -13<sup>th</sup> September 2004

Opening 12<sup>th</sup> August 2004

#### Artists Statement

“I am for an art that is political, mystical, erotical, that does something other than sit on its ass in a museum”. I have reminded myself of this quote by Claes Oldenberg ever since I read it at an exhibition of contemporary art and human rights in support of Amnesty International's work. Since then I have made it my concern and commitment to bring together humanitarian issues and contemporary art.

This series of photographs, part performance and part sculpture is titled “Universal Declaration of Human Rights”. Each photograph corresponds to one of the 30 articles of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The project is in support of the fantastic work of the United Nations Association. For more information on their work visit [www.una-uk.org](http://www.una-uk.org).

The main feature of the photographs is that all the figures wear large black and white masks. This is a continuation of a theme in my work where figures often wear masks. In this project the masks feature as a representation of the mind, the chaos, the intertwining of our good and bad emotions. I wanted to represent the mind whilst illustrating the rights, as it is this area I believe, which is most crucial to look at if we are ever to achieve these rights.

These figures are faceless and so are unidentifiable, but they can still be seen as human from a sense of character that speaks from clothes and body positions. I wanted the photographs to represent a universal story. This was also relevant in choosing landscapes for the photographs. I tried to have them simple and abstract so that they could have been shot in a number of different countries.

The photographic side of the project entailed deciding upon and experimenting with locations and people to find an image which would best suit each article. It has been a large communal project involving the kindness of friends and family posing as models. They represent the small group in one individual's life, a small representation of the global family. The joy of this project has been in bringing fine art closer to home. Witnessing nurses, teachers, farmers and people from all areas of life bringing their own ideas and creativity to the project was wonderful.

Emma Skeldon is an Artist who graduated from Camberwell School of Art this summer.

All photographs are for sale at £175.

