

WASHINGTON DC - Photography show and programs at Provisions, a Washington resource, explore DNA exoneration, February 11 -- April 15, 2006

A compelling exhibition and series of programs at Provisions Library, a Washington resource devoted to activism and the arts, will explore the human and legal dimensions of conviction reversals due to DNA -- a development that has been much in the news recently.

"The Innocents: Head Shots," a nationally touring photo exhibition, opens in Washington at Provisions Library from February 11 through April 15. Programs include a documentary film, theater piece, book reading by an exoneree, a panel symposium on DNA forensics, an artist's talk and a photography workshop for students. Details and dates follow. Admission is free for all events except for the film screenings.

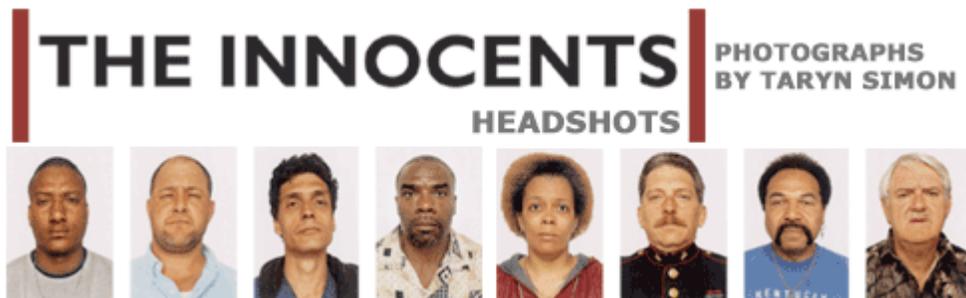
Exhibition: *The Innocents: Headshots*

Photographs by Taryn Simon

Saturday, Feb 11 -- Saturday, Apr 15

[Press Preview] Friday, Feb 10, 12 - 5 pm

The exhibition presents photographic portraits of 45 wrongfully convicted individuals exonerated using DNA evidence. While police 'mugshots' and photoarrays have routinely been used to condemn the guilty, artist Taryn Simon reframes that convention by documenting innocent victims of mistaken identity and perverted justice. Shown with an accompanying video of interviews with exonerees, these faces and voices powerfully expose the fault-lines of a deeply flawed and unreliable criminal judicial system. This traveling exhibition was curated by Umbrage Editions to mark the 10th anniversary of the Innocence Project.



Film screenings of *After Innocence* (Director: Jessica Sanders, 2004, 95 minutes)

Wednesday and Friday, Mar 1 and 3, 7 pm

Press preview Tuesday, Feb 27, 2006, 7 pm

Admission: \$5

This Sundance award-winning film, shortlisted for the Academy Awards, tells the story of seven men and their emotional journey back into society after being imprisoned for decades and then released after DNA evidence proved their innocence. Thrust back into society with little or no support from the system that put them behind bars, the exonerees we meet in *After Innocence* remind us that the human toll of wrongful conviction can last far longer than the sentences served. The film raises basic questions about our criminal justice system, life after exoneration, and society's moral obligation to the innocent, many of whom receive no compensation.

Performance excerpts from *The Exonerated* with Jessica Blank and Eric Jensen followed by reading from their *Living Justice: Love, Freedom and the Making of The Exonerated*

Saturday, Mar 18, 7 pm

In its continued exploration of the intersections between artmaking and activism, Provisions presents a uniquely contextualized staging of excerpts from the award-winning play *The Exonerated*. Created from interviews with former death row inmates who

were convicted of murder, sentenced to death and later freed amidst overwhelming evidence of their innocence, *The Exonerated* was first staged by Tim Robbins' The Actors Gang in Los Angeles and later by New York Bleecker Street Theater's The Culture Project, where it won where it won the Outer Critics Circle Award for Outstanding Off-Broadway Play, and a Drama Desk Award. The play examines capital punishment and the justice system through the stories of six real-life death row exonerees. This excerpted performance in Provisions' exhibition space will be followed by readings from the playwrights' new book *Living Justice: Love, Freedom and the Making of The Exonerated*, in which Jessica Blank and Eric Jensen will discuss the creation of the play as an activist expression and political tool. This program debuts with the PEN/Faulkner Reading Series on Friday, March 17th, 8:00 p.m. at the Folger Shakespeare Library.

DNA on Trial: A Teach-In on Science and Criminal Justice

Saturday, Apr 1, 10 am

Despite the success of the Innocence Project in postconviction exonerations, the increased use of DNA testing raises controversial ethical problems for criminal prosecution in the realm of civil liberties and forensic error. DNA technology has been used not just to exonerate hundreds but also to convict thousands. Will law enforcement DNA databases expand to include millions not convicted of any crime? Do they provide the ultimate threat to civil liberties and privacy? Do they in fact increase the likelihood of genetic or racial profiling? Join us for a lively symposium and teach-in on the history, use and future of DNA technology in criminal justice. Participants will include Innocence Project experts, death penalty reform advocates and critics of DNA forensics.

Bloodsworth: The True Story of the First Death Row Inmate Exonerated by DNA

Book reading by exoneree Kirk Bloodsworth with author Tim Junkin

Wednesday, Apr 5, 7 pm

Bloodsworth (2004), written by Tim Junkin, is the true story of Kirk Bloodsworth's false conviction in 1984 for the rape and murder of a nine-year-old girl, and his eventual release in 2001 making him the first person on death row to be exonerated by DNA testing. Bloodsworth has since become a leading advocate for criminal justice reform and the Innocence Protection Act of 2004, which includes the Kirk Bloodsworth Post-Conviction DNA testing program. This reading will mark the launch of the book's paperback edition, and is presented in coordination with The Justice Project.

Crime and Photography: Artist Talk and workshop on documentary photography for students

Friday, Apr 14, 7 pm

Photographer Taryn Simon will describe the inspiration and process that lay behind the making of *The Innocents: Headshots*. Following the artist talk, local educators will lead Washington D.C.-area high students in exploring the ways in which both documentary photography and science have been used to prove guilt and innocence. Topics covered will include the history of crime photography and the power of documentary photography to overturn convictions based on eyewitness testimony.

For updated information on programs visit: www.provisionslibrary.org

Provisions Library: Resources for Arts and Social Change

1611 Connecticut Avenue, NW Washington, D.C. 20009

Phone: 202-299-0460

Metro: Red Line/Dupont Circle, Q Street

Hours: Tuesday – Friday 12-7; Saturday 12-5

Provisions is an arts and social change learning resource amplifying compelling voices that challenge and redefine the mainstream. Located in Dupont Circle, it combines an exhibition space, library, and experimental studio that provides a platform for experiencing alternative perspectives and radical visions that inspire the activist in each of us.

Sponsored by Gaea Foundation and the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts