

MEDIA RELEASE - DRAFT

For immediate release

5 July 2010

True stories of migrants in Calais explored in new play

"We're standing 21 miles from the British coast. On a clear day you can see it. They feel they are close to their dream of reaching England" - French Refugee Aid Worker

WHAT: Launch of new documentary play, *On a Clear Day You Can See Dover*

WHEN: Wed 28th July @ 7:30pm, Wilton's Music Hall, London

Acclaimed theatre company iceandfire are again delving into controversial and topical material with their new documentary play, *On a Clear Day You Can See Dover*, a script which weaves together factual information and testimonies gathered from interviews with destitute migrants stuck in Calais who are seeking to enter the UK.

The research and writing was undertaken by iceandfire's founder and Associate Writer, Sonja Linden. Sonja has been to Calais twice to gather testimonies from the migrants there and responses from French people on the ground, both those supportive and hostile to the migrant population.

Once launched, the script will become part of iceandfire's outreach repertoire and rehearsed readings of the script will be offered upon request for little or no cost for any organisation wishing to host it.

Ali is an unaccompanied minor from Afghanistan:

"If I knew what it was like I wouldn't have come. I didn't know it would be like this. My home is dangerous but anything is better than this. My parents were killed in a bomb attack and I have no-one left in Afghanistan. I'm 14. No really. I am living rough, so I look older than I really am."

Sonja Linden, founder of iceandfire and writer of *On a Clear Day You Can See Dover*, says that the migrants in Calais are such a derided group that it seemed like an important project to find out who they really are:

"Traumatised young people fleeing conflict zones in Afghanistan, Iraq and Darfur have told me that in Calais they feel less than human. Unwanted by France and blocked from entering the UK, hundreds of migrants are trapped in Calais, forced to sleep rough and subject to daily police harassment. I created this documentary piece to draw attention to this humanitarian crisis on our doorstep."

Sonja will be discussing the play after the London performance on July 28, along with **Green MEP for London, Jean Lambert**, and other guest speakers.

Jean Lambert MEP says that this is an important play, which tells the stories of truly dispossessed people:

*"Unable to move forward or go back, hundreds of destitute migrants trapped in Calais have been consigned to a life in limbo and yet are the victims of war and persecution. I really welcome this production, *On a Clear Day You Can See Dover*, which challenges us to find policy and*

political solutions for those affected and adds to the discussion about the importance of implementing laws that bind France, the UK and the EU in protecting human rights."

This project has been generously supported by the Helen Tetlow Memorial Fund.

Interviews are available with Sonja Linden, iceandfire's co-Artistic Director Christine Bacon and French Aid Worker Lily Boillet.

The show will also be performed in Leeds, at the Carriageworks on 20th July.

Background Notes:

iceandfire explores human rights stories through performance. Over the last seven years we have become a theatre company with a distinct, contemporary voice creating work of excellence across our four work strands: production, outreach, education and participation.

www.iceandfire.co.uk