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**CONTACT**

Voleine Amilcar, ITVS      415-356-8383 x 244  
Mary Lugo                    770-623-8190  
Cara White                  843-881-1480

[voleine\\_amilcar@itvs.org](mailto:voleine_amilcar@itvs.org)  
[lugo@negia.net](mailto:lugo@negia.net)  
[cara.white@mac.com](mailto:cara.white@mac.com)

For downloadable images, visit [pbs.org/pressroom/](http://pbs.org/pressroom/)

For the program companion website, visit [pbs.org/independentlens/children-of-haiti](http://pbs.org/independentlens/children-of-haiti)

**CHILDREN OF HAITI, PREMIERES ON INDEPENDENT LENS**  
**TUESDAY, JANUARY 11, 2011 AT 10 PM**

**A Poignant Look at the Country's Abandoned Youth,  
Film Premieres One Year after Earthquake**

(San Francisco, CA) — Told through the eyes of three teenage street boys, *Children of Haiti* takes viewers on a poignant journey through the northern city of Cap-Haitien, providing an up-close-and-personal look at Haiti's national epidemic of over 500,000 orphans. In their own voices, Denick, Nickenson, and Antoine share stories of survival, pride, and hope on the harsh and unforgiving streets. *Children of Haiti* will premiere on the Emmy® Award-winning PBS series *Independent Lens*, hosted by America Ferrera, on Tuesday, January 11, 2011 at 10 PM (check local listings).

In the midst of Haiti's lush mountains and historical relics, hundreds of thousands of orphaned and abandoned children wander the streets day and night. Known as the Sanguine ("soulless") and forgotten by their own people, they have struggled for survival since long before the devastating 2010 earthquake. *Children of Haiti* follows three teenage street boys as they reflect on their country and their lives, sharing a common dream of education, government assistance, and social acceptance.



Following the evolution and transformation of these boys into young men, the film provides direct insight into Haiti's ongoing problem of abandoned youth. Presented from the street boys' perspective, *Children of Haiti* examines a complicated issue that has not only plagued the country for decades, but grows more severe every day.

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Shot over a period of three years, *Children of Haiti* reveals the country's strange contrasts: a land of breathtaking landscapes and remarkable heritage, but also great human tragedy, all seen through the eyes of these poetic boys. Despite the nearly insurmountable obstacles, the boys show that a few can still manage to find hope, and even a little joy, in the harsh reality that surrounds them.

### Haiti by the Numbers

380,000	Estimated number of orphans prior to earthquake
1,000,000	Estimated number of orphans since earthquake
70	Percentage of workforce that is unemployed
50	Percentage of population who can neither read nor write
90	Percentage of Haiti's schools that are private and charge for school supplies and uniforms, leaving the poorest children unable to attend

To learn more about the film and the issues involved, visit the companion website for *Children of Haiti* at [www.pbs.org/independentlens/children-of-haiti](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/children-of-haiti). Get detailed information on the film, watch preview clips, read an interview with the filmmakers, and explore the subject in depth with links and resources.

### Featured On-Air Participants

**Denick** was a charming 14-year-old — at the time of filming — who splits his time between his mother and stepfather's house and the streets of Cap-Haitien. His family can barely support their eight children, leaving Denick to wander the streets in search of work.

**Nickenson** has been on and off the streets since he was eight years old. Both his parents died when he was a child, but he occasionally sleeps at his aunt and uncle's house on the outskirts of Cap-Haitien.

**Antoine** doesn't know his age, but the best guess is that he is somewhere between 13 and 16. Unfortunately, he, like many other Haitian children, has fallen into abusing paint thinner to escape reality.

### About the Filmmakers

**Alexandria Hammond (Producer/Director/Cinematographer/Editor)** is a Mexican American filmmaker based in New York City, who has traveled and documented in more than 30 countries. Her credits include TV, feature films, music videos, commercials, dozens of short narratives, and documentaries such as Albert Maysles's *Close Up: Portraits* (co-editor) and *Dominick Dunne: After the Party* (cinematographer). Her work has screened at the Hamptons Film Festival, Raindance, the New York Film & Video Festival, and most recently at the Museum of Modern Art. *Children of Haiti* is her directorial debut. Hammond is currently co-directing a feature film about Memphis punk musician Jay Reatard with filmmaker Ian Markiewicz, and is in production on a documentary in Mexico City.

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### **About *Independent Lens***

*Independent Lens* is an Emmy® Award-winning weekly series airing Tuesday nights at 10 PM on PBS. The acclaimed anthology series features documentaries and a limited number of fiction films united by the creative freedom, artistic achievement, and unflinching visions of their independent producers. *Independent Lens* features unforgettable stories about a unique individual, community, or moment in history. Presented by ITVS, the series is supported by interactive companion websites and national publicity and community engagement campaigns. Further information about the series is available at [www.pbs.org/independentlens](http://www.pbs.org/independentlens). *Independent Lens* is jointly curated by ITVS and PBS, and is funded by the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), a private corporation funded by the American people, with additional funding provided by PBS and the National Endowment for the Arts. The series producer is Lois Vossen.

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