



P.O.V.'s *HOLD ME TIGHT, LET ME GO*

By Kim Longinotto

Tuesday, July 28, 2009 on PBS (Check local listings)

Filmmaker's Statement

When I first went to see the Mulberry Bush School, within 20 minutes of arriving, I knew I wanted to make a film there. I remembered that during my own school days, the driving force behind everything was punishment and discipline. You were constantly in fear and you didn't feel good. The aim of the school was to break down your self-esteem.

By contrast, at Mulberry the goal is to help the kids feel happier and more confident. When they misbehave, the teachers don't punish them, but try to find out why they are acting like that. The way I heard adults speaking to children was so different from anything I had experienced, either with my parents or at school. For instance, I had never seen men being gentle and sympathetic with little boys.

The Mulberry Bush School tries to mend the hurt of the outside world. The children come from a mixture of backgrounds. They all have different stories. What links them is that nearly all have endured great sadness and upheaval in their lives.

As I filmed and then completed **Hold Me Tight, Let Me Go**, I was really touched by the kids' mix of rebelliousness, sadness and wisdom. I realize more and more how wise children are, and how often we don't respect them very much.

— **Kim Longinotto, Director/Producer/Cinematographer**

