



PRESS RELEASE

Booth-Clibborn Editions is proud to announce an unusual addition to their portfolio — a book that will be the hippest and most inspiring holiday gift for 1999. **Disguised as a coffee table book, *Shootback* bridges many genres at once: photojournalism, fine art, social commentary.**

The making of this book is a story in itself. American photographer Lana Wong first visited Mathare, one of Africa's largest, poorest and most notorious slums in September 1995. Two years later she launched *Shootback*, a project that puts basic point-and-shoot cameras into the hands of thirty-one local boys and girls, aged twelve to seventeen, selected from the MYSA football league. Encouraged to tell their stories with photographs and words, the *Shootback* Team challenge traditional perceptions and give us a new take on the developing world and our own lives.

Shootback, the book that has grown out of the project, takes the reader into the slum without the mediation of a foreign photographer's eye. **The 200 photographs taken by the youth, and their own stories, speak eloquently of family, friends, football fever and the harsh realities of the slums.** Sharp and bright, the teens' eyes pick on telling details from their world. Many are poignant or tragic, others reveal an infectious humour, hope and disarming sense of honesty — but this is ultimately a celebration of slum life from the inside.

The refreshingly understated design makes this book immensely accessible and allows the strength and beauty of the images to make a lasting impression. **All royalties from the book's sales will go directly towards school fees for the *Shootback* Team and a new community media training centre in Nairobi.**

Thanks to support from the Ford Foundation, Netherlands Development Assistance (NEDA) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Shootback* is an ongoing project.

BACKGROUND NOTES FOR EDITORS:

MYSA (the Mathare Youth Sports Association) is Africa's largest youth football league with over 1,000 boys' and girls' teams from 80 slum villages which are also committed to environmental clean-up, AIDS education and gender partnership. Established in 1987 in Nairobi, Kenya, it is one of the most successful development projects in the world. Over 40,000 youth have benefited from MYSA programmes in the past decade. Mathare United, MYSA's professional team, made Kenyan football history by winning the 1998 Moi Golden Cup, and by representing Kenya in Africa's 1999 Cup Winners Cup. MYSA received the UNEP Global 500 Award for environmental innovation and achievement during the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro.

Lana Wong was born in New York and studied fine art/photography at Harvard University and the Royal College of Art, London. She moved to Kenya in 1996 and worked in East Africa as a photographer for various UN agencies. Her photographs have been exhibited internationally and she has worked as a television presenter (BBC), photographic curator and teacher. Her personal photographic work and installations have focused on gender and cultural identity issues.



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