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Press Release

CHAVI

Private view: 5th September 6pm-9pm
Exhibition: 6th September – 13th October
Open: Mon- Sat
10:00am– 6.00pm
Entry: **FREE ENTRY**



Chav culture, its showy glitz and tawdry style is taken back to its roots via three artists from Gypsy and Traveller communities in the UK. Through contemporary art discourse they reflect upon their individual position in society whilst critiquing the role of the Gypsy in societal narratives. Daniel Baker and Damian and Delaine Le Bas are currently exhibiting at the Venice Biennale in the first Roma Pavilion 'Paradise Lost', and 'Refusing Exclusion' at the Prague Biennale.

Chavi, the Romany word for kid, has been recently appropriated as a derogatory label for working class youth style. Although the look signalled by this label has its origins in a Gypsy aesthetic, these references are usually forgotten, reflecting society's ongoing denial or ignorance of the Gypsy's creative influence on wider society. CHAVI seeks to address any myopic views of the Gypsy by offering a view from within whilst exposing and commenting on the origins of a street style.

By making work that confronts and subverts stereotypes these artists re-evaluate and at the same time reclaim Gypsy representation.

Paradise Lost; the First Roma Pavilion, Venice Biennale 2007

'The Roma are probably the only thing Europe has that is truly European. The English Romani faction, including Damian and Delaine Le Bas and Daniel Baker are clearly an informed bunch each using this position to their advantage... The palazzo's fabric laden rooms hammered home the delicate balance between craft and the visually hermetic vocabulary specific to the Roma. Yet altogether it is probably the most sincere survey of art from a community that properly questions our ideas of what a nation, nationhood or national representation actually is or could be.'

Aaron Moulton, Flash Art, July 2007.

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ABOUT NOVAS:

The novas Contemporary Urban Centre is part of novas arts a subsidiary of the Novas Group, where we aim to change lives through arts, enterprise and support.

The Group has developed a strong reputation for the delivery of quality housing and community-based services, and for new and innovative approaches to working with people who experience inequality, exclusion and discrimination.

More recently we are developing extensive work, learning, social enterprise and cultural services to support our core work and to match and stretch the diverse aspirations of the people we support.

*The **Novas Contemporary Urban Centre** is a new idea for the 21st Century. An Arts, Cultural and Social enterprise, the Novas Contemporary Urban Centre will reflect the themes of contemporary life in the urban environment, particularly from the point of view of marginalised and excluded communities. By celebrating, exploring and engaging with the vibrant yet latent talent of the dispossessed, Novas aims to break the cycle of poverty and exclusion.*

*Few social problems have had so visible a place on the urban landscape as homelessness and exclusion and **novas arts**' mantra is dedicated to exposing broad and diverse audiences to its themes. A goal for novas arts is to provide a creative forum for participants to express their feelings and use their experiences to create better understanding of the themes and issues involved. Another goal is to help generate compassion for people who truly need and want help to change their lives and engage with the world around them.*

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