

## University community project to help young adults express their dreams

Posted on Monday 13th February 2012

From the 13<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> February unemployed young men from the multiply deprived Bromford estate in east Birmingham will be working alongside the 'urban spiritual artist' Mohammed 'aerosol' Ali, The Hub youth centre and Dr Chris Shannahan of the University of Birmingham to design and spray-paint their dreams for their community onto an 8 feet high, 8 feet wide cube. After the unveiling which will take place as part of a community event on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> February at 12 noon the 'Bromford Dreams' Cube-art will be on display in the streets of Bromford, after which it will be exhibited in different locations across the city of Birmingham.



The project arises from 18 months fieldwork undertaken by Dr Shannahan, working alongside unemployed young men on the Bromford estate in east Birmingham. This has focused on the impact that social exclusion has on the ways in which young men on urban housing estates think and talk about identity, meaning and spirituality. Further information about the project can be found [here](http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/theologyandreligion/research/projects/social-exclusion.aspx) (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/ptr/departments/theologyandreligion/research/projects/social-exclusion.aspx>).

**Mohammed 'aerosol' Ali** (<http://www.aerosolarabic.com/>) is an award winning artist who has painted murals in major cities including New York, Chicago, Toronto, Kuala Lumpur, Melbourne and Dubai. His work seeks to bridge the gap between different faiths and cultures. Mohammed will lead the young people on a week-long journey, visiting his studio-gallery in the Sparkbrook area of Birmingham and touring the inner-city murals he has painted across the city. The journey aims to inspire them to develop their own artwork and understand his approach of painting for social change.

**Worth Unlimited** (<http://www.worthunlimited.co.uk/index.html>) is a faith-based charity working with socially excluded young people across the UK. At its heart is a commitment to 'building hope, unlocking potential and realising worth'. 'The Hub' youth centre in Bromford is at the heart of Worth's work in Birmingham.

**Dr Chris Shannahan** (<http://www.birmingham.ac.uk/staff/profiles/tr/shannahan-chris.aspx>) is a Research Fellow in Urban Theology at the University of Birmingham. His work focuses on the changing face of faith in the city, especially amongst socially excluded young people.