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The Phoenix Cinema is please to announce the showing of award winning British art film *Helen* (2008) followed by Q&A session with directors Joe Lawlor and Christine Molloy

Sunday 3 May 2009 7pm

The Phoenix will be welcoming directorial team and real-life couple; Joe Lawlor and Christine Molloy, to the Phoenix for a Question and Answer session following a screening of their debut feature film *Helen*.

Winner of the Grand Jury Price and Best Actress at Premiers Plans Festival 2009, as well as countless nominations including the Michael Powell Award at Edinburgh International Film Festival, *Helen* is the latest product of a twenty year partnership between Joe and Christine. Picked out for UK distribution by New Wave Films at the Edinburgh International Film Festival 2008, *Helen* is the follow up feature from a number of short films entitled *Civic Life*, which includes award winning *Who Killed Brown Owl* (2004) and *Joy* (2007). *Civic Life* involved local community groups in the production of nine short films made for cinema, shot on 35mm cinemascope making extensive use of the long take. The films can be likened to an intricate narrative painting, revealed to the audience piece by piece.

Making their mark on the UK art-film community, *Helen* is a visually creative tale unwoven before the viewers' eyes, re-enforcing the UK's hold on groundbreaking film work. As Jonathan Romney of the Independent says, '2008 brought a surprise renaissance for idiosyncratic, highly crafted, defiantly non-mainstream UK-made films'. *Helen* is 'the latest vital sign of a UK art-cinema resurgence'.

Helen (PG)

At 5pm (not Sun), 7pm, 9pm (not Thurs) 1 hr 19. UK 2009. Directed by Joe Lawlor and Christine Molloy. With Annie Townsend, Sandie Malia and Dennis Jobling.

When local teenager Joy disappears, the police ask for help staging a reconstruction. Helen, a young loner, is chosen for her uncanny resemblance to the missing girl. While Helen is an outsider raised in care homes, Joy was raised by loving parents and surrounded by a large group of friends. Helen longs to know what it's like to be surrounded by security and love and begins to immerse herself in the role, visiting the people and places Joy knew. The film subtly explores the impact of this role-playing on Helen and is a promising debut for both filmmakers and Annie Townsend, who is impressively understated in the title role. It's a gentle and tender story of a girl looking to find herself as she starts her adult life.

Tickets £9 / £6 concessions

Box office 020 8444 6789 or www.phoenixcinema.co.uk

Note to journalists:

The Phoenix is the oldest purpose-built cinema in constant operation in the country. We show a range of great films from around the world, as well as holding events with directors, producers, writers and actors. We also have a busy education programme for all ages.

For more information on the Phoenix please contact Paul Homer
paul@phoenixcinema.co.uk 020 8442 0442

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