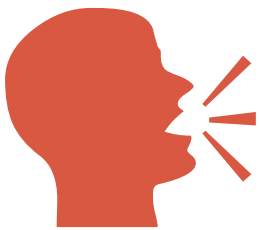




# UK ARTS AND CULTURE

# CANCELLED, BY ORDER OF THE HOME OFFICE



JOSIE APPLETON &  
MANICK GOVINDA



MANIFESTOCLUB



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## Executive summary

# 1 THE NEW POINTS-BASED SYSTEM

In November 2008, the Home Office introduced a new points-based system (PBS) and visa restrictions, which affected international artists and academics visiting the UK for talks, exhibitions, concerts or residencies.

The new points-based system includes harsh new controls on non-EU visitors, including:

- ✘ Visitors now must apply for a visa in person and supply biometric data, electronic fingerprint scans and a digital photograph;
- ✘ Individuals must either show that they have at least £800 of savings, which have been held for at least three months prior to the date of their application, or the host organisation will maintain and accommodate the migrant until the end of their first month of employment in the UK;
- ✘ The host organisation must keep copies of the visitor's passport and their UK biometric card, and a history of their contact details;
- ✘ If the visitor does not turn up to their studio or place of work, or their whereabouts are unknown, the organisation is legally obliged to inform the UK Border Agency.

These measures have already had a disastrous effect on UK arts – with cancelled concerts, talks and visits across the UK. The Home Office has largely consulted with larger organisations and stakeholders - groups that are more likely to be able to cope with the bureaucratic hurdles involved. As a result, it has not heard the anger and dismay from the many thousands of smaller organisations and individuals who are being affected. This report is the first survey of the cancelled arts and academic events, which are the direct result of the new entrance requirements.

# 2 MANIFESTO CLUB VISITING ARTISTS CAMPAIGN

The Manifesto Club's Campaign against the Home Office's restrictions launched in February 2009, with a letter to the Observer signed by artists including Antony Gormley and Jeremy Deller, and heads of arts institutions including the directors of the National Theatre and National Portrait Gallery. [1]

[1] [www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2009/feb/22/9](http://www.guardian.co.uk/theobserver/2009/feb/22/9)

Our campaign sparked an extraordinary response from artists and academics, in the UK and across the world. [2] Nearly 6000 people have signed our petition. Many others have sent us email testimonies, completed our online survey, or joined our Facebook group. Over the past few months, we have received hundreds of testimonies from people who have experienced these regulations first hand.

### **3 THE DAMAGE DONE TO UK ARTS/ACADEMIA**

Case studies cited in this report include:

- ✘ Two cancellations of high-profile concerts by the Russian classical pianist Grigory Sokolov;
- ✘ The cancellation of a visit by Iranian film director Abbas Kiarostami, to direct *Così fan tutte* for English National Opera;
- ✘ The closure of the Swansea-based Ballet Russe, whose dancers were unable to get Visas;
- ✘ The Canadian singer Allison Crowe was detained at Gatwick, then deported and told she would not perform in the UK again;
- ✘ A number of cancelled arts workshops and academic talks;
- ✘ Many non-EU academics and artists say that they will no longer visit the UK because of these regulations;
- ✘ Several UK universities are having difficulties putting together international lecture series;
- ✘ Arts organisations who are reporting extreme difficulty include: Belfast Children's festival, jazz clubs, salsa and tango dance clubs, Gregorian choirs, community theatres. Many arts organisations say that they can no longer invite non-EU artists;
- ✘ Several cases of incompetence/aggression by border officials, including students' Visas rejected because they did not have the correct background colour in their photographs;
- ✘ A number of cases of artists unable to visit because they did not meet the £800-savings requirement;
- ✘ International students are being subjected to new levels of surveillance on campus, including: passport checks, putting attendance registers online, and biometric ID cards.

[2] [www.manifestoclub.com/visitingartists](http://www.manifestoclub.com/visitingartists)

Within the arts/academic communities, there is widespread concern that these measures:

- ✘ Discriminate against overseas artists/academics on financial grounds;
- ✘ Punish small and independent arts organisations, and are particularly likely to reduce fringe/experimental arts events;
- ✘ Increase surveillance of non-EU visitors, staff and students, and damage the relationships between artists, academics and their students;
- ✘ Isolate UK arts – and damage the UK’s reputation as a centre for international arts;
- ✘ Contradict the UK government’s stated aims to support the arts and cultural exchange.

These new regulations will do little to stop terrorists – who are unlikely to go through official channels - but are instead hampering UK arts organisations that are already struggling in a recession.

We call on the Home Office to urgently reconsider the new immigration points-based system, and to carry out a thorough review of its effects - before more damage is done to Britain’s artistic and intellectual life, and international relationships.



## CANCELLED: MUSIC

There have been two cancellations of high-profile concerts by the Russian pianist Grigory Sokolov, a regular performer in the UK:

The Russian pianist Grigory Sokolov's show at the Barbican was cancelled because of the necessity for the new biometric visa. For years Sokolov was able to apply for his visa by proxy, but the new regulations meant he would have had to personally travel from Verona, where he lives, to Rome, to provide fingerprints. His replacement show, scheduled for April 2009 at the Royal Festival Hall also had to be cancelled, after he lost a year-long battle to agree a mobile visa solution.

Such cancellations have led to considerable anger from organisers and members of the public:

JAMES O'BRIEN branch secretary  
PCS, Tate Galleries

*"This has already had a negative effect at Tate on artists and disappointed ticket holders when a concert in a major programme had to be cancelled because the musicians could not obtain their visas ... stop it!"*

The Canadian singer Allison Crowe was detained at Gatwick, then deported and told not to re-enter the country – to the annoyance of fans:

Allison Crowe, 27, and her two band mates were fingerprinted and had their passports confiscated shortly after flying into Gatwick Airport. She said they were shut in a room where they were denied contact with the outside world for six hours and that she was told she would never perform in Europe again once her passports had been stamped by the UK Border Authority as 'barred from entry'. [3]

LAURA JANE NOTT nurse

*"This legislation means that my favourite Canadian singer/songwriter Allison Crowe will never be allowed back into Britain."*

African musicians are finding it particularly difficult to deal with the new procedures, since they may need to travel to another country to obtain a Visa:

DAVID FLOWER Sasa Music  
Promotions Ltd

*"I run a music touring agency that brings musicians to perform in the UK from, amongst other countries, Mali. The visa application rules have recently changed again, with the likely effect that no Malian nationals will be able to afford to apply for UK visas in Africa, leaving Paris as their only chance to get them, provided they are also working on France on the same tour. This whole process in Dakar will not only take 2 weeks (allowing for travel) but*

[3] [www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/music-news/5358603/Canadian-musician-held-for-11-hours-at-Gatwick-before-deportation.html](http://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/music/music-news/5358603/Canadian-musician-held-for-11-hours-at-Gatwick-before-deportation.html)

*will cost any group thousands of pounds. Return flights to Dakar, 10 days in hotels in Dakar plus welfare. My current application is for 7 people. A rough estimate would be £5-6000 (plus costs of visas). The result is that, unless they can apply successfully in Paris, groups will no longer consider it affordable to come to perform in UK. UK audiences will be deprived of the chance to watch artists of the calibre of Tinariwen, Oumou Sangare, Toumani Diabate, Bassekou Kouyate, Super Rail Band, Rokia Traore and many others. These are some of the finest artists currently on the international scene."*

West African jazz band Les Amazones de Guinée had to pay £3500 to travel from Guinea to Freetown, Sierra Leone, to obtain fingerprints for their visas. This was a waste of time and money, however, since the band was refused entry to the UK.

ARTS MANAGER UK regional  
culture initiative

*"We had to cancel the closing performance of an arts festival – SAMA South Asian Music & Arts – due to an artist being refused a visa and stranded in Pakistan. Other artists from South Africa were almost refused entry to UK, luckily our letter of support eventually allowed them entry."*

There are also difficulties for Russian and Georgian choirs, who have been frequent visitors to the UK:

JEREMY HUMMERSTONE Vicar of  
Torrington, Devon

*"The Russian church choir that has visited us annually for many years is now finding great difficulty in entering the country. The singers always go home to Russia after their tour and could not present any kind of threat, so why are they subjected to the indignity of being treated as potential criminals?"*

KATHERINA GARRATT-ADAMS UK  
manager for MTIEBI Traditional  
Georgian choir

*"Every time I have organised a tour for Georgians, the UK visa and work permit requirements have become more complicated and a lot more expensive, why has the UK adopted this policy of deterring artists from outside the EU?"*

Restrictions are also having an impact on the jazz and club scene, especially for more alternative music:

LEE PATERSON Gobetween

*"In the past I have been able to organise entry for various musicians to do 3–10 date tours of UK, obtaining a work permit via a small London club that I'm involved with (one venue used to be able to apply for a work permit covering several dates and venues); all are professional musicians with international careers & recognition, some in a long-standing band; and sometimes I would bring in an individual to work with UK musicians – providing the opportunity for a collaboration that couldn't otherwise occur. These visits weren't done for money; returns were low for the work involved, but they were rare opportunities to hear the musicians together, often on the wilder shores of free improvised jazz. I now have to find a promoter or some other to sponsor a tour - the band therefore will have to be a fairly assured success financially, and fit the sponsor's taste. The more experimental music will be heard less, and the bands that were made up of predominantly UK musicians with one incoming musician will not exist."*

- JOHN AMOS publicity assistant,  
Plymouth Jazz Club *"These rules will make it almost impossible to feature musicians from outside the EU."*
- SEGUN LEE-FRENCH Speakeasy  
(spoken word and music  
night), Manchester *"We have decided not to book artists outside of the EU because we do not have the capacity to deal with the extra administrative work, nor the funds to allow for the possibility of last-minute cancellations, due to refused visas."*
- NEW YORK PERFORMER  
AND PRODUCER *"This will make it much more costly and difficult for promoters and agencies to book me to play in the UK."*



## CANCELLED: VISUAL ARTS

Several artists have been prevented from visiting their opening shows:

- FABIO ROSSI gallery director *"These are absurd regulations which have already affected an artist represented by our gallery who was refused a visa to come to install his show in February and attend the opening."*

Chinese artist Huang Xu was refused a visa to attend his exhibition at London's October Gallery.

There have also been cancelled artists' residencies:

- MANICK GOVINDA Artsadmin *"Artsadmin's artist Anne Bean invited a young Kurdish-Iraqi artist over for the Visiting Arts' Artists to Artists Programme. Although she received a certificate of sponsorship from a licensed sponsor she was refused a visa."*
- AMY CHAM Blackburn *"An Indonesian artist, Wiwik S Wulandari, was invited to undertake a three-month residency at Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery (BMAG) as part of plAAy, their 2 year Contemporary Asian Art Programme. The residency was due to run from mid-January–March 2009 and the initial invitation was issued in August 2008. In the period between Aug–Nov 2008, Ms Wulandari attempted to apply for an Artist Visa from the British Embassy in Indonesia, however time after time they issued her with the incorrect application form, first for an entertainer's visa, then actor's visa etc. When they finally came to place her in the correct category as a visual artist the new laws had come into effect. Due to the lack of time by that point for BMAG to register as a sponsor and be able to issue a certificate of sponsorship the museum had no choice but to cancel her residency. Subsequently, due to the cost of the partial refund on already booked flights for Ms Wulandari and now the unforeseen costs of sponsor registration and sponsorship fees, BMAG have had no choice but to cancel Ms Wulandari's residency indefinitely. BMAG have for many years worked previously with international artists from across the Asia Diaspora (including Indonesia) and all artists in the past were able to undertake residencies with an easily obtained Artist Visa. As well as this residency the rest of plAAy programme will certainly be impacted, with residencies and an exhibition planned with artists from Japan, China and Thailand among many others."*



Some arts organisations report that they will no longer be able to invite non-EU artists:

JON BOWEN director,  
Ten Acre Trust

*"Overseas artists have been important to our programme of events. Under the new rules, we simply can't invite them from outside the EU."*

PIL AND GALIA KOLLECTIV

*"As international artists and curators working in London, we are now increasingly anxious about our status. We also find the new regulations limit the artists we can consider inviting to be in our exhibitions."*

IA MANUIA artist, curator, lecturer  
from Aotearoa NZ

*I curated a large-scale exhibition for Cambridge University Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, called Pasifka Styles, which featured 32 artists from the Pacific. These new regulations would make it extremely hard for me to continue and sustain relationships that have been built up over the four years for which the exhibition was showing (the regulations have already affected an artist who has been offered much work over here but no Visa).*

As well as some cancelled arts events:

SUSAN BAILEY photographer

*"In the last two weeks alone weeks two events I had booked have been cancelled due to these new visa regulations."*



## **CANCELLED: DANCE**

We have received several testimonies about the collapse of the unique and popular Ballet Russe, a small company based in Swansea – which was forced to close after months of expensive negotiations attempting to secure Visas for its principal dancers.

CELIA KIRKBY FRSA director, Ballet  
Russe ([www.balletrusse.com](http://www.balletrusse.com))

*"For the past ten years, a small Russian Ballet Company has made its home in Swansea, taking the highest standards of Russian Classical Ballet to small venues throughout the UK. A few of the older dancers have been granted residency but when we applied for Work Permits for the younger members, who had gone home to Russia to see their families in summer 2008, the authorities raised endless problems ranging from whether or not the concept of "Russian Classical Ballet" even existed, to suggestions that we should advertise the "vacancies" in a national newspaper rather than in Dance Europe. We put the whole sorry situation in the hands of a specialist solicitor at considerable expense but with scant success and the process dragged on so long that two couples got fed up with waiting and found other work. We did finally get one male principal back for a month in January but since then the company has had to stop touring and the UK resident dancers are teaching and translating. So the UK has been deprived of a unique art form that was being taken to out-of-the way places where ballet of any kind is rarely seen, countless British children from local dance schools will no longer have the opportunity to take part in professional productions of Nutcracker, Coppélia, Cinderella, La Fille Mal Gardée and other favourite classics, coached by a Bolshoi-trained Artistic Director/Choreographer."*

KIRKBY RONALD FRANK Deputy  
Chair, RSA Wales & Western Region

*"Home Office obstruction to the issuing of work permits to Principal Dancers of Swansea Ballet Russe who had already been in the UK for many years has not only deprived UK audiences of much appreciated world class ballet but also ruined the lives of the dancers (who had supported and raised thousands of pounds for charity over the years in the UK), and caused Ballet Russe to cancel all its bookings and go seriously into debt. I believe that the Home Office, while having the power to interpret the rules with common sense, have failed to do so - bringing itself and the Government into disrepute."*

CHARLOTTE LEADBEATER artist  
and lecturer

*"These measures have caused our small Russian ballet company - Ballet Russe - to cease to function - seeing the amount of taxes & Vat they earned for the country it is a huge disgrace. Also the dancers made their homes here for 10 years - what have they got to go back to?"*

The UK's vibrant tango scene has also been affected, with established festivals now becoming a bureaucratic nightmare.

SIMON WHITTLE administrator

*"Am trying to organise a major International Tango Festival, and this is a bureaucratic nightmare."*

ANTHONY M HOWELL artist and  
author, and Tango Schumann

*"These restrictions will drastically reduce the chances of good Argentine tango dancers being able to enter the country as no small venue could afford to pay a fee to the government on top of the fee payable to the two Argentine artists. Thus these restrictions severely impair the development of tango in the UK."*

We have reports of a similar effect on salsa and African dance:

SARAH CLARK amateur  
salsa dancer

*"As a keen amateur salsa dancer I have already been affected by these restrictions, which have prevented Cuban dancers from entering the UK to teach at Salsa Congresses. The cultural exchange that takes place through salsa across the UK is hugely enriching to the lives of people in the UK, and actively promotes community cohesion through multi-racial and multi-cultural events. These restrictions discriminate against people from developing countries and limited resources who will not be able to take valuable opportunities that visiting our country may also provide."*

JULIE FOUNTAIN

*"I train in African dance and benefit most from young African tutors teaching here on work visas. I have already been affected by cancellations of courses due to tutors' visa problems when they were due to travel from poor countries."*

Some international dancers are choosing not to visit the UK for tours:

MARNIE ORR dancer

*"I am shocked to hear that to attend a conference as an artist or student, I am now required to give over biometric information. This is an injustice for visitors. I am now not going to the UK this year - on my trip I have taken every two years since 2004. The UK is losing people from every single direction."*



## CANCELLED: THEATRE

We have received reports of theatre professionals unable to enter the UK, cancelled workshops, and international theatrical collaboration that must now be called off. This particularly affects smaller theatre groups:

SARAH KANE theatre  
director, Michael  
Chekhov Centre UK

*"With very recent experience of a valued theatre colleague no longer being able to enter the UK, the new limitations placed on cultural exchange and artistic freedom, that can only be of benefit to society at large, appal me."*

MELANIE WYNYARD

*"Our organisation has had to cancel a workshop by a leading practitioner who felt he could not face the 'incredible bureaucratic mess' and get the paper work done in time – how many more will there be?"*

PAUL HARMAN chair, Theatre  
for Young Audiences-UK,  
Centre of ASSITEJ

*"I have direct experience of a project which could not proceed because of the restrictive conditions placed on long-term residents in other EU countries, invited to perform in the UK as part of a cultural exchange. The costs associated with such procedures also inhibit exchange between smaller cultural and arts organisations."*

JULIA LEE BARCLAY artistic  
director, Apocryphal Theatre

*"This legislation makes meaningful cultural exchange outside the EU very difficult and as the director of a small experimental international theatre company could make planned exchanges with North and South America almost impossible."*



## CANCELLED: ACADEMIC VISITS

There are several cases of academics refused Visas for planned trips:

The Russian artist and academic, Dmitry Vilensky, was invited by The Showroom Gallery and Afterall Journal in London to give a seminar on his work on 17 January 2009. The gallery was forced to cancel the seminar when Valensky's visa application was rejected, on the grounds that he was not allowed to be paid a fee for participating in the seminar. A further appeal, with the proviso that he was not to be paid, was also rejected. Valensky had never faced such restrictions on his many professional visits to other European countries.

Academic researchers and students are choosing not to visit the UK, and cancelling conferences or study trips. This is affecting academic areas from music to medical sciences:

NON-EU SCIENTIST

*"After the introduction of the new regulations, I've cancelled one trip to UK where I was supposed to attend a meeting related to an international, EU-funded project. Since all my scientific work at the time was related to that project, it was rather stupid that I wasn't there. This year I chose not to attend the European Conference on Eye Movements in Southampton, even though I was approached to give a presentation there."*

ALPER PhD student and researcher

*"As a non-EU researcher, I already cancelled one visit to UK due to the lengthy and ridiculous visa application procedures."*

DR PAUL GOODEY head of school,  
Royal Northern College of Music

*"The measures this government have introduced, and plan to introduce will – without doubt - have a detrimental effect on the UK's arts and the UK's education. Already, I am seeing international students turn us down as they are not allowed to work in their chosen field: performance. This new proposal takes such draconian measures one stage further – a tragedy for the culture of this country."*

DAVID ZINDER Prof Emeritus  
Department of Theatre Arts,  
Tel Aviv University, Israel

*"I recently cancelled a long-planned two week workshop for Masters Students at Exeter University Drama department due to these draconian and demeaning measures."*

More broadly, universities are finding it difficult to organise international lecture programmes and conferences:

FRANK ABBOTT programme leader,  
Visual Arts Masters, Nottingham  
Trent University

*"This is already affecting our ability to maintain the teaching of an international curriculum to our international student body. Part of the reputation of UK art education is its awareness of international contexts, through its ability to introduce students to visiting international artists."*

TAMAR GARB Professor

*"As head of department for a major Art History department in a UK University, I experience the new legislation as a crippling initiative, which makes it very difficult for us to host overseas artists and academics. It will stifle intellectual life in the UK."*

WILLIAM ROWE Professor

*"These measures serve no positive public service. They are already causing me trouble with American guests to a conference."*

SAM AINSLEY senior lecturer in fine  
art, Glasgow School of Art

*"We are currently engaged in organising radio interviews with visiting artists, a symposium with visiting artists and a major retrospective exhibition of art from Glasgow involving artists who now live abroad (and who can blame them). All of this is put at risk by this astonishingly short sighted and ill conceived piece of unnecessary bureaucracy. STOP it in its tracks now."*

TERRY SHAVE Professor of fine art,  
Head of Visual Arts, Nottingham  
Trent University

*"We have already met this problem. Our students will suffer without the breadth of international visitors who give one-off lectures to them about practice and projects."*



## **CANCELLED: LITERATURE FESTIVALS**

Literary agents and festival organisers are finding it more difficult to get their authors over to give talks. This could have the effect of reducing non-EU publications available in the UK:

JIM HINKS editor

*"It's become very difficult to bring non-EU authors here to launch the UK publication of their books (events which generate essential publicity)."*

*I fear that, as a secondary result of this legislation, we'll see even fewer titles by non-EU authors published in translation in the UK."*

ALI FITZGIBBON director, Belfast  
Children's Festival

*"This legislative change is damaging international cultural relations for our country and hampering our work. It must be changed to reflect the needs of industry and exchange."*

ISOBEL DIXON literary agent

*"As a literary agent with many author clients from around the world (from South Africa, India and the USA, for example), I think these ridiculously onerous terms will have a severely detrimental effect, and will prevent many overseas authors from visiting the UK."*

## ◆ PENALISING SMALL ORGANISATIONS

Many of our case studies come from small organisations and self-employed individuals – who are less able to bear the financial and bureaucratic costs of these new Visa controls. These organisations are responsible for the more fringe and cutting-edge arts in the UK.

MONTSERRAT GILL co-artistic  
director, Dende Collective

*"Small art organisations like ourselves will be deprived of important and interesting collaborations with artists from abroad. We have many links with Brazil, and produce work with a Brazilian influence here in the UK and for us it's very important to keep that channel open, and be able to invite artists from there, but not being a regularly funded organisation, we work on very tight budgets and usually understaffed, these new regulations force us to give up any attempt at collaboration."*

LEE PATERSON Gobetween jazz

*"I'm self-employed, not eligible for sponsor status."*

MALCOLM FERRIS academic,  
research and exhibitions  
development

*"As someone involved in curating small-scale events (for example, with Chinese performance artists) which are difficult enough to arrange in themselves but which add enormously to the vitality of the UK, I am horrified at the unreasonable costs and obligations this legislation will place on me, as well as any visiting artists. I can see that this legislation will effectively bring these activities to an end."*

CLAUDIA ZEISKE, director,  
Deveron Arts

*"The new legislation is unbelievably restrictive for arts organisations. In particular for smaller organisation it is now next to impossible to bring artists into the country on a legal basis. We would like to hear from others how they deal with this."*

CHRIS BRERETON promoter

*"This will have a huge effect on the DIY music scene and other marginal art forms that don't necessarily attract much in the way of grants and other funding. It's the grassroots, small-scale art performances that will suffer the greatest as the bigger institutions and artists will be able to finance and satisfy the Home Office proposed requirements."*

MARIA OSHODI CEO/artistic  
director

*"The new changes have greatly effected Extant, a small performing arts company that engages with international artists to maintain a wider network within the field of visual impairment."*

## ◆ PENALISING CASH-STRAPPED PERFORMERS

We have received a number of reports from people unable to meet the £800 savings requirement of the new regulations:

KIM ANDERSON visual artist

*"I have had to leave the UK and am not able to enter at this current time due to lack of available funds (ie. the 800 pound bank account requirement)."*

DR RICHARD POVALL

*"We have already had a student from Zimbabwe unable to attend because of these new regulations (on financial grounds)."*

Others are being affected by the increased costs and financial risks of application:

TIM SANDERS saxophonist/arranger  
with Kick Horns, and contributor  
to albums by Baaba Maal,  
Oumou Sangare, Rachid Taha.

*"As a musician with strong connections with other musicians from the developing world through my work with Africa Express, I am appalled at the effectively racist outcome of these new procedures. Many concerts by African musicians of international standing have already been compromised or cancelled for economic reasons."*

SUSAN SELLERS professor

*"I am extremely worried about the implications these restrictions will have on non-EU students. They are discriminatory against students from poorer backgrounds and countries and appear at odds with the government's commitment to recruiting international excellence. If maintained, they will have a devastating impact on learning, making it primarily an arena of the wealthy."*

## ◆ BUREAUCRATIC ERRORS/HEAVY HANDEDNESS

There have also been a number of cases of Kafkaesque and heavy-handed treatment of applicants, particularly from those considered 'difficult' countries:

The Iranian film director, Abbas Kiarostami, cancelled his trip to direct *Cosi fan tutte* for English National Opera. "I want to be absolutely clear that my decision was based solely on the disgraceful treatment to which I was subjected. I travel regularly to France and Italy and am no stranger to the bureaucratic dances we Iranians need to perform to obtain visas. However, the actions of the [British] embassy were of a wholly different order." His paperwork was deemed correct, and he gave fingerprints, he said. "A visa was duly granted. A few hours later it was withdrawn and I was asked to resubmit my application. I did so immediately and

was asked for a second set of prints. When I pointed out my prints were unlikely to have changed ... I was told this method had been used to catch over 5,000 criminals worldwide." He decided to withdraw. [4]

MARINA DE ITA musician

*"Before being denied, I was treated really bad, under investigation for around 12 hours, enclosed in a room with people considered suspicious. We were all just from Latinoamerica, Africa or Asia."*

We have also received reports of errors and incompetence by border officials:

AMELIA CAVALLO Multiple

*"I am an actor/musician from the USA who was denied a visa that I qualify for based on a number of mistakes that the Home Office made, including sending the refused application to the wrong address where it sat for weeks without me knowing. After hiring a lawyer and fighting it out with the HO, I managed to get the visa that I originally qualified for and come back to the UK. Unfortunately, I missed out on 3 months of work which seriously hampers my ability to make enough money to switch to a more permanent visa. I also have companies who are willing to sponsor me but are finding the new regulations difficult, to say the least."*

In one case a group of students had their applications refused due to the background used in their photographs. University College Union [5]

## ◆ SURVEILLANCE OF INTERNATIONAL VISITORS

The University and College Union (UCU) reports that the new Visa controls mean academic staff have an obligation to monitor their international students, and report them to UK border authorities in cases including:

- ✘ When a student does not enrol on the course at the expected time, the information must be given within 10 working days and must include any reason given (for example a missed flight);
- ✘ Where a student has missed 10 expected interactions (for example, tutorials, submission of coursework etc);
- ✘ Any suspicions that a student is breaching the conditions of his or her leave;
- ✘ Detailed requirements of record keeping and reporting for up to two years after the student is no longer sponsored.

UCU also reports that from 25 November 2009, the government will begin issuing biometric ID cards to all non-EU students and spouses and this will extend to students applying for loans in 2010. Existing student visas will not be renewed without providing bio-metric data and obtaining the ID card.

[4] [www.guardian.co.uk/film/2009/may/09/iranian-kiarostami-director-cancels-visit](http://www.guardian.co.uk/film/2009/may/09/iranian-kiarostami-director-cancels-visit)

[5] [www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/k/g/pbs\\_seminarreport\\_apr09.pdf](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/k/g/pbs_seminarreport_apr09.pdf)

Universities and colleges will be required to keep photocopied records of the biometric cards.

Academics say that these rules turn universities into branches of the police, interfere with their relationships with their students and undermine academic autonomy.

ED SCHEER president, Performance  
Studies International

*"Arts organisations and universities are not extensions of the Home Office."*

UNIVERSITY COLLEGE UNION

*"One of the more pernicious effects of this new system will be to turn our members into an extra arm of the police force placing monitoring and reporting responsibilities onto academic and support staff."*

DENNIS WONG Southampton  
UCU branch

*"The claim of institutions becoming "international" becomes nothing of the sort, as responsibility shifts towards surveillance and removal, and away from welcome and cultural exchange. Southampton University UCU opposes the introduction of the points based immigration system and supports the motion of the UCU black members' conference denouncing its introduction."*

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) had wanted an even greater degree of surveillance: Universities UK report that they 'fought strongly against the UKBA in advising institutions on how or what type of student to recruit'. [6]

There are reports of universities introducing new surveillance procedures of international students and staff:

DR. RAIMI GBADAMOSI artist

*"I had to take my passport to Nottingham last week to give a talk. The university apologised profusely, but still made me bring it. It was to make sure I was not a foreigner."*

UCU BRANCH, UNIVERSITY  
OF WALES Lampeter

*"The university wishes to check the legal documents of all staff to establish whether they have the right to work in the UK. The employer states 'this is in order to comply with equality legislation the University carries out checks on all employees whether or not they are UK citizens'."*

UCU BRANCH, GOLDSMITH  
COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY  
OF LONDON

*"Staff are now being asked to put their attendance registers online, and are being told that if they don't "make a point of doing this" that Goldsmiths could lose its licence for recruiting international students." [7]*

## ◆ A BAD REPUTATION: ISOLATING UK ARTS

A number of artists, dancers and academics expressed concern that these measures would damage Britain's reputation for high-quality arts, and as a hub for international collaboration.

WONA BLAZWICK OBE, director,  
Whitechapel Gallery

*"The barriers these regulations present to artists from around the world will make a terrible impact on Britain's reputation as an international centre for*

[6] [www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/k/g/pbs\\_seminarreport\\_apr09.pdf](http://www.ucu.org.uk/media/pdf/k/g/pbs_seminarreport_apr09.pdf)

[7] [www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3705](http://www.ucu.org.uk/index.cfm?articleid=3705)



*the arts. For over 100 years, the Whitechapel Gallery has celebrated global cultures and generated dialogue between western and non-western artists. This ruling will impede international exchange; and deny local and national audiences the opportunity to encounter important art from abroad."*

CELIA KIRKBY FRSA, director,  
Ballet Russe

*"Perhaps worst of all, the reputation of the UK as a free-spirit embracing art and culture from all parts of the world is at an all time low – certainly in the dance community worldwide – and no doubt in other artistic circles."*

DR TOM GRETTON senior lecturer

*"This is a very serious threat to the high international reputation of UK higher education and the UK's status as a hub of the international art world."*

PAUL HURLEY academic/artist,  
University of Bristol

*"These draconian measures are already proving detrimental to the UK's intellectual, cultural and of course financial economy, and will only continue to do so. They must be reconsidered."*

HELEN GILBERT professor of theatre

*"The new immigration laws make Britain look like a laughing stock and are particularly inappropriate when transnational dialogue is key to finding solutions to some of the world's more intractable problems. The British government has funded me to invite scholars here for high level debate on key public issues - are they now going to make it impossible for me to run the symposia for which I've been funded?"*

LORNA HUTSON professor of  
English literature, Head  
of the School of English,  
University of St Andrews

*"We risk making the UK more parochial, less of a participant in world-leading international research collaborations, by means of these bureaucratic impediments to short-term international visits and conference travel."*

We have received some angry comments from international visitors, suggesting that this damage to national reputation is indeed occurring:

DANNY DEANE US Musician

*"This is not what our fathers fought for in WWII – giving 4 years of service in the UK to help protect our English cousins – I was denied entry/detained/then deported - it was an insult to his memory."*

LOIS HAYES Australia

*"Yet another very good reason why Australia should cease its ties with the monarchy. In reality, the UK does not consider Australia part of their realm."*

More broadly, artists felt that the reduction in international collaboration would have a negative effect on their work – and on their relationships with fellow artists across the world:

SYLVIA FINZI, Sylvia Finzi Studios

*"My work would be impoverished by the reduced exchange."*

INDEPENDENT ARTIST London

*"Reduced international exchanges could harm the quality of my work, rendering it more 'provincial'."*

New York performer and producer

*"This could increase the reputation of the UK having an 'island mentality'."*

ANNA LUCAS artist

*"As both a recipient of overseas hospitality, and as a host to a varied and talented selection of overseas artists, I would reinforce claims that the new regulations seriously hinder the opportunity for vital exchange, collaboration and dissemination of ideas and friendships across nations."*



## CAMPAIGN FOR FREE MOVEMENT

There is widespread anger within the arts and academic sectors: these regulations are seen as pointless, restrictive, and in bad faith.

Many people who contacted us expressed the view that these regulations would do nothing to stop terrorism – and instead would have a self-destructive impact on everyday life in the UK.

ALAN PAYNE arts manager

*"The effects of these regulations appear to be contrary to core values of a Western democracy. Looks like a win for the Islamists."*

BILL COLLINS CHAIRMAN  
Mevagissey Male Choir

*"Central government seems intent on doing the terrorists' work for them; i.e adversely affecting the British way of life and fostering an air of xenophobia."*

DARREN ABRAHAMS

*"The war on terrorism is turning into a war on everyone. Time to stop and see sense."*

JOHN TAYLOR record producer

*"We urgently need to snap out of the philistine, paranoid mindset where 'security' trumps all else, including common sense."*

There is a widespread commitment to the ideals of international exchange, and the benefits of artists and academics collaborating across borders. Some are calling for the arts and academia to defend the ideal of international freedom of movement.

PAULINE HADAWAY director, Belfast  
Exposed photography gallery



*"Organisations need to become more assertive and to review and strengthen their policy around international exchange. To this end organisations should refer to their mission statements and establish a philosophical basis for their policy alongside a set of criteria for defining and selecting artists."*

PRUE SKENE chair, Rambert  
Dance Company



*"The internationalism of the arts is a principle and a need that must be upheld and it is hugely important that these restrictive measures are resisted by all who value cultural interchange."*

In a letter to the Guardian, a number of academics have already said that they will boycott the new regulations. [8] There are many more like them. We call on the Home Office to take account of the damage these regulations are doing – and to consider revoking them.

[8] [www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/apr/14/immigration-higher-education](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2009/apr/14/immigration-higher-education)

## Appendix



### Manifesto Club

The Manifesto Club campaigns against the hyperregulation of everyday life. We support free movement across borders, free expression and free association. We challenge booze bans, photo bans, vetting and speech codes - all new ways in which the state regulates everyday life on the streets, in workplaces and in our private lives.

We believe that the freedom issues of the twenty-first century cut across old political boundaries, and require new schools of political thought, and new methods of campaigning and organisation.

Our rapidly growing membership is composed of free thinkers and free spirits, from all political traditions and none, and from all corners of the world. Their support is essential to us. Members contribute financially to enable us to organise events and campaigns, and to release publications. Our membership is also essential to the intellectual, political and organisational work of the club. To join this rapidly expanding group of free thinkers and campaigners see: [www.manifestoclub.com](http://www.manifestoclub.com)

### Freedom Summer



This report is published as part of Freedom Summer - the Manifesto Club's pan-European series of events standing up against the Hyperregulation of everyday life. Events run from May to September, and include: a picnic on Brighton beach against booze bans; a sports day against vetting; a photo-book against ludicrous safety signage; and debates about freedom in Prague, Venice and Paris.

### Manifesto Club Visiting Artists Petition

To sign the petition, see the campaign page:

[www.manifestoclub.com/visitingartists](http://www.manifestoclub.com/visitingartists)

The UK Home Office has introduced new bureaucratic procedures for organisations that wish to invite non-EU artists and academics to the UK. As professionals committed to the principles of internationalism and cultural exchange, we are dismayed by these new regulations - which will curb our invitations to non-EU artists and academics to visit the UK for talks, artist residencies, conferences and temporary exhibitions.

The system is costly to both the host organisation and to the visitor, and has already meant a number of cancelled exhibitions and concerts. All non-EU

visitors now must apply for a visa in person, and supply biometric data, electronic fingerprint scans and a digital photograph. The Home Office's 158-page guideline document also outlines new controls over visitors' day-to-day activity: visitors must show that they have at least £800 pounds of personal savings, which have been held for at least three months prior to the date of their application; the host organisation must keep copies of the visitor's passport and their UK Biometric Card, and a history of their contact details; and if the visitor does not turn up to their studio or place of work, or their whereabouts is unknown, the organisation is legally obliged to inform the UK Border Agency.

We, the undersigned, believe that these Home Office restrictions discriminate against our overseas colleagues on the grounds of their nationality and financial resources, and will be particularly detrimental to artists from developing countries, and those with low income. Such restrictions will damage the vital contribution made by global artists and scholars to cultural, intellectual and civic life in the UK.

#### About the Authors



Josie Appleton is convenor of the Manifesto Club. She has coordinated many of the club's campaigns, against CRB checks, booze bans and other forms of state hyperregulation of everyday life; written many of the club's reports and documents; and edits Manifesto Club publications. As a journalist and writer, she comments frequently on contemporary freedom issues.



Manick Govinda coordinated the Manifesto Club visiting artists campaign. He is Head of Artists' Advisory Services at Artsadmin. He also works as Producer for Artsadmin and has worked on Zarina Bhimji's *Out of Blue* (2002) and Franko B's *Oh Lover Boy* (2001) and *Still Life* (2003). He is currently working with Zineb Sedira, Yara El-Sherbini and Zarina Bhimji.

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