

## Correspondence Since September 15, 2006 Board Meeting

### 1. Welcome to New Friends of the Foundation:

*Keith Orchiston* (Calgary VIDEA member who facilitated an exchange in Kelowna, B.C. and Zambia); *Colin Gorrie* (Coordinator of Vancouver Island Children's Festival); *Catherine McGregor* (UVic doctoral candidate/Professor-Leadership Studies); *Lori O'Rorke* (ESL instructor-Malaspina Univ/College); *Elinor McNamee-Annett* (Student at Burnsview Secondary School-Delta); *Clare McNamee-Annett* (Student at Lester B. Pearson College); *Fernand Magnin* (Gr. 4/5 French Immersion teacher - Doncaster School, Victoria); *Gordon Kokak* (Kugluktuk, Nunavut); *Deanna Peluso* (UVic); *Paige Fisher* (UVic); *Ana-Elisa Armstrong de Almeida* (UVic); *Leanna Madill* (UVic); *Anna Nielson* (UVic); *Henrietta Langram-DesBrisay* (Saanich School District); *Jane Cameron* (Vancouver School District); *Dianne Cross* (Sidney Art Council); *Sandra Santarossa* (Cleveland Elementary); *Adrienne McAlpine*; *Marlene Westerlaund*; *Karen Macartuy*; *Karen Foster*; *Michelle Li*; *Diane Simpson*; *Nicholas Stanger*; *Jessica Hamilton* (UBC, Teacher Education); *Rachelle Turenne* (UBC, Teacher Education); *Dave Whitfield* (Teacher Education, SFU); *Leah Papillo* (Rochester Elementary, District43); *Will Gordon* (Capital Mental Health Assoc.); *Diane Thorpe* (District of Saanich-Community Arts Specialist); *Lisa Taylor* (Teacher, School District 61); *Lynda Bradley* (Mary Manning/Child Abuse & Prevention); *Alex Achtem* (overseas interest); *Pippa Dean-Veerman* (UVic- Art Education); *Jane Cundall* (Montessori Teacher); *Celia Young* (Tecumseh School, Vancouver); *Ashley Akins* (UVic International PhotoJournalism); *Jim Curtin* (Teacher, Cumberland, BC)

**Total number of Friends to date: 160**

### 2. CGAF Website Update: [www.childrensglobalarts.ca](http://www.childrensglobalarts.ca)

141 galleries listed; 3010 visitors; 17 comments

Board members, Tim Molnar (Professor at the University of Saskatoon) and Tim Hopper (UVic) have been busy updating the website. The following changes and additions have (or will be) administered: i) adding a link to the "Children's Global Arts Foundation"; ii) changing the "Project Partners" title (on main page) to "Art Exchanges", iii) adding the "Vietnam Friendship Village Project" [[www.vietnamfriendship.org](http://www.vietnamfriendship.org)] to our list of "support/sponsors" ; iv) adding new artwork from children in New Delhi, Vietnam, Lake Cowichan, and Vancouver, and v) other pending changes. Tim H. still plans to contact Karen Chester for further support and assistance.

### 3. Child Advocate/Youth Advisor Recognition

Gita John expressed how wonderful it was to sit at a board meeting with a child! It is her first ever - she recognizes how many organizations have talked and talked about this - but have never done it. She feels this is a "rare and wonderful privilege".

### 4. Children's Art Exchange Updates

Dr. Bob Dalton has received children's artwork from *Bloom School, New Delhi*; the *Vietnam Friendship Village*; and *King David School, Vancouver*, and is arranging for each piece to be photographed for the CGA website. Once the artwork has been photographed they will be sent to the corresponding exchange locations.

2.

*a) Bloom School, New Delhi and Erin Woods School, Calgary*

The children's "we are all related" artwork from New Delhi will be sent to Jana Sharon's grade 5 class. Jana's students are presently working on artwork (with a similar theme) to be sent to Bloom School in New Delhi in January, 2007 (along with a cd collection of Bloom students' artwork).

*b) Vietnam Friendship Village and Lake Cowichan*

Ida Giordano collected the children's artwork from the Vietnam Friendship Village during her work and travels through Vietnam in early November. Once photographed, this artwork will make their way to children in Lake Cowichan, B.C. (who have already sent artwork and a poem to the Vietnam Friendship Village via Cady Williams & Carol Stewart). Darlene Tully (Lake Cowichan facilitator) mentioned how eager the children in Lake Cowichan are to hear from the children from the village, and to share artwork with them. Apparently one boy, who did not feel comfortable making a picture asked if he could write a poem. Darlene shared how wonderful it was to see all of the children investing their energies so intently on this project! "It inspired lots of curiosity and wishes to learn more about the children in Vietnam and around the world. It also was a real demonstration in empathy, friendship, and hope". Darlene is planning an artwork exhibit in Lake Cowichan (in January 2007), featuring artwork from children in Vietnam, Iraq, Afghanistan, and Lake Cowichan. It is anticipated that this exhibit will inspire ongoing art exchanges with children in Vietnam (and also Israel/Palestine if a connection transpires).

*Related:* Michelle Mason, Canadian liaison for the Vietnam Friendship Village has kindly sent us her documentary of the Vietnam Friendship Village - a compelling and informative film that is a wonderful addition to the beautiful artwork that we have received from the children residing there. Michelle also wanted to let us know that she has about 12 framed drawings from children who were living at the village 5 years ago, and has offered to loan them to us as an addition to our exhibit. Nadine suggested to Darlene that she view the Vietnam Friendship Village website [[www.vietnamfriendship.org](http://www.vietnamfriendship.org)] to find insightful information on Agent Orange (main page-links), as well as photos of children at the Village, background and history of Village, and other useful information.

*Related:* Brigitte Mueller (Vietnam Friendship Village member living in Germany) wanted to thank the CGAF for organizing the art exchange with the Vietnam Friendship Village, and for keeping her updated. As a member of the International Teachers Association (ITA) Brigitte also requested that we write and send a CGA article for a Peace Pedagogical Newsletter in Denmark, interested in global exchange projects. ITA has members in Russia, Denmark, Belarus, Ukraine, Georgia, UK, Nepal, Pakistan, Hungary, India, etc., and Brigitte feels this article would be a good opportunity to spread the Global Arts word in many countries. The deadline for the next issue is Dec. 12. It is uncertain whether we will have time to submit an article in time.

3.

c) *Erin Woods School, Calgary and Deenabandhu, India*

Jeff Belcher and Cheryl Zelmer couriered a box (through Greyhound Bus) to Victoria in order it's contents to be sent to India through friends of Gita John's (late November and remainder in early 2007). This box of gifts contains *The Mouse and the Light quilt and film productions*, signed copies of local Calgary and Canadian *books* (purchased by Scholastic Book Company and student's pocket change), *maple syrup granules* (for a "taste" of Canada), *notes from students*, etc.. As informed to us by Gita, Bara (in Deenabandhu) is also facilitating further art exchanges for the children of Erin Woods, Calgary.

Related: The Mouse and the Light

Author, Lisa Suhay has been reading updates with great interest and has informed us that she has just launched her new mermaid book and will now have some breathing space to think about pitching Mouse and the Light to a Canadian publisher (proceeds generously offered to the CGAF). Lisa will let us know how it goes.

d) *Reynolds High School, Victoria and Shahid Jabbar English Exemplary School, Iraq*

Heather Coey has informed us that 26 students each from Victoria and Iraq (from schools mentioned above) will be connecting over the course of the year.

5. Spain and Mexico Connections

*Spain*

Dr. Carmen Rodriguez de France is grateful for becoming a new "Friend" of the foundation as she "admires and appreciates the efforts from everyone involved in this wonderful project". Carmen has informed us that the people at the Early Childhood Development Peace Conference in Spain are interested in the Global Arts video. Carmen has mailed a copy to the coordinators.

*Mexico*

a) Utilizing the work of Wileman (1993) who recognizes that visual literacy is "the ability to read, interpret, and understand information presented in pictorial or graphic images", Carmen and colleagues in Mexico have initiated research with 16 students from 2 different schools in Monterrey, Mexico. Their paper is entitled "Through the eyes of others: Exploring students' understandings of war and peace through the examination of artistic representations". Implications for fostering values such as empathy, compassion, and appreciation for life will also be explored. The artwork created by peers in Iraq and Afghanistan artwork will form the basis for student examination.

b) Alexandre Wicks has arrived in Mexico and has started his work with Save the Children. In his activity proposal for the next 3 months he included the possibility of starting Global Arts in Obregon, Mexico. Alex has reassured us that the project will go through, and that he has received positive responses thus far, particularly at the Elementary age level. Alex also mentioned that he has been speaking with a contact in Peru, who is very interested in pursuing Global Arts in his country. Nadine informed Alex that exchanges for Mexico and Peru could be organized once grade levels and/or ages of the participating children have been determined.

#### 4.

In regards to Alex's 'lesson plans', Nadine let him know there are no standard guidelines, curriculum, or manual in which participants can follow step by step. The reason for this is that the ideas that transpire through the open themes of "the world we live in" and "the world we want", and through the art mediums of children's choice - taking into account the art resources that are available, and the comfort levels of leaders/facilitators - are as vast and wide as the children and participants who take part in this initiative. The lesson plan becomes created as part of the global arts process - through a child honouring process where each child's voice is allowed to be expressed in their own way without standards or adult interruption. A suggestion that was offered - given the context of the impoverished area (and an added interest at UVic) - is to perhaps approach these themes with a "health and wellness" focus..... To start, one might begin a discussion with the children about the world or the community in which they live in and what that looks like - or feels like - for them. Do they feel healthy and well in their world or community? If they were to share these messages with other children in Canada or around the world, how would they like to do this? What art materials would (or could they use)? Embracing the theme of "the world we want", a discussion could take place around "what would a healthy and well world look - or feel like for you"? "How could you express this to others?" Also keeping in mind that these terms (the world we live in, the world we want, health, wellness...) are defined broadly enough so that children are able to choose their own meanings and expressions for them. Depending on the age and context, it was also mentioned how these terms could be altered slightly for better meaning and understanding (i.e. using words such as neighbourhood, village, community...etc.).

Nadine also noted that by posing this initiative open-endedly, it may cause initial confusion and apprehension. However, once discussion begins, and the process evolves, it is wonderfully rewarding and inspiring to observe how the project begins to take a life of its own depending on the realities, the visions, and the interests of the children - hence the child honouring component of this project.

#### 6. Media & Film Updates

##### *a) Global Arts and the National Film Board*

Art Holbrook put a great deal of time and energy in attempting to meet CIDA's "Mass Media Initiative" October 25, 2006 deadline for submitting a proposal to pursue a National Film on the Global Arts initiative. Art managed to secure a film director (David Springbett of Asterisk Productions) as well as inspiring story connections (including Hands Across Borders and Education Without Borders), but regrets to inform us that he was unable to secure a broadcaster (a CIDA requirement) in time for the October deadline. The good news is that the Art will be keeping in touch with the happenings of the Global Arts initiative with an eye to trying again next year. Art thanks those involved for taking the time to respond to his queries, and presenting him with fascinating stories that deserve to be told to larger audiences. He hopes he'll be able to do just that. The Foundation appreciates all of Art's time and efforts in pursuing film-making funding for the Global Arts initiative, and looks forward to working with him in the future!

*b) A-Channel News*

Kim Crowell (coordinator of Victoria International Art Symposium) informed us that *A-Channel news* sought out the Children's Art Exhibit during the October 2006 Art Symposium and got some footage of it. According to Kim, "They were really excited about it". Nadine let Kim know about the Langford Fire Hall media event for Thursday Oct. 5 and asked her to pass along this news to A-Channel.

*c) Global National*

The CGAF joined the Langford Fire Department media event on October 5, 2006 (for their shipment and mission to Afghanistan). Bob Beckett, Geoff Spriggs and a host of other volunteer Firefighters, welcomed Nadine and Joe warmly into their Firehall, showing us all of the materials and supplies on route to Afghanistan: firefighting apparatus, wheelchairs, soccer balls, sewing machines, stuffed animals, *and* our CGAF gently used art supplies and children's artwork. It was a wonderful feeling observing the philanthropic efforts put forth by our Langford Firefighting community - we were proud to be in partnership with such an inspirational and kindhearted team.

Kristen Munoz shared a similar story about her family's visit to the Langford Fire Hall (to drop off the last of the art supplies). When they arrived, they received a very warm welcome by Bob Beckett and Geoff Spriggs and were given a tour of the outgoing supplies. It just so happened that the firefighters were packing the artwork from Sundance School and the art supplies that they had gathered from various schools. Kristen's daughter Maya took all of this in, and later at dinner - during their ritual "toasting of things they are thankful for", she lifted up her glass and said "cheers to mom for her gently used art supply idea". It was a touching moment to think of an 8 year old acknowledging the thoughtful work of her mom.

*Note:* The Global National journalist and cameraman showed a strong interest in the CGAF and wanted to cover it as a separate story. They returned to Victoria the following Friday to cover more of the story at Sundance Elementary School. Kristen Munoz's recruited 5 students who revisited the "world we want" theme with pastels, and she also made arrangements for the shoot. Jeffrey Pitcher (our 10 yr. old board member), Nadine Cruickshanks, and Tim Hopper were available for interviewing and support on the day of the shoot. Budd Hall (former Dean of Education, UVic) expressed how thrilled he is at the way that this work continues to grow and expand. "The voices of the young, voices of the teachers seem to me to be so powerful...and the images of course. The hunger for a world where hope replaces fear as the foundational principle is so evident" (Budd). Ted Riecken, present Dean of Education, UVic, also offered his support by stating that National exposure is the sort of thing the project needs, "especially now a time where peace keeping is taking such a back seat to military maneuvers in Afghanistan".

This CCA report was viewed on Global National on *October 14, 2006*.

*d) Saanich News: "Drawing understanding"*

Article featuring the Global Arts initiative was published in Saanich News on October 25, 2006

6.

7. Children's Global Arts Note cards

400 CGA note cards have been created (highlighting 4 children's artwork images) and sold in packages of 4 (one set for \$5). These cards have proved very useful for sending out thank you and holiday cards, and also as promotional materials.

8. Art lessons in School District #61

Glenn Earl (a custodian at Sir James Douglas Elementary) noticed a thank you card that Nadine had sent to his school (for their 'gently used art supply' support). Glenn wanted to pass along his support and interest for the work of the CGAF, and also noted that he teaches art lessons throughout School District # 61 and would love to be involved in our program somehow. Glenn has created his first Step-by-Step Art Lesson DVD, ( drawing & coloring a Red Eyed Tree Frog), and feels that other children from counties such as Afghanistan, Iran, etc would love to see what children in our school system are doing in the way of art lessons.

Nadine spoke with Glenn regarding the nature of the Global Arts project in relation to his art lesson DVD. Nadine explained the organic nature of the project, and the intent to move away from prescribed and standardized lesson plans in order to open up creative and contextual spaces for expression. She mentioned to Glenn that his DVD may be appropriate and applicable for other art-related school projects and would be happy to assist in getting his DVD into the Faculty of Education Curriculum Library and also pass it along to UVic Art educator, Bob Dalton. Glenn will contact Nadine once his "studio-version" is ready for outreach.

9. Royal Roads: EcoFest Update

Cindy Moyer sent us a draft of the latest Ecofest booklet, in which she has included the Children's Global Arts Foundation. The concept is to use this collaborative alliance of organizations to expand the reach of each of them in support of ecological literacy. It is undecided at this time the extent and nature of the CGAF in relation to the June 2007, EcoFest event.

10. Vancouver Island International Children's Festival Update

Nadine met with organizer Colin Gorrie to discuss CGA involvement at the Vancouver Island International Children's Festival to be held in May, 2007 in Nanaimo (May 7-8) and Langford (May 10-12). Three ideas were discussed: 1) A children's art exhibition in Bear Mountain arena lobby (and possible Vietnam artwork to accompany a Vietnam "water puppet" workshop; 2) An interactive and creative "art wall" for viewers to express their ideas for "the world we live in" and "the world we want"; and 3) A global arts workshop for participants interested in incorporating global arts in schools or other community services.

11. Children's Art Exhibition - Philippines

Bob Dalton passed a note along from Lisa Mitchell, the Dept. of Anthropology, UVic, regarding the opening of a children's art exhibit in the Philippines - as part of graduate student Soma

Morse's second stage of fieldwork. A request has been forwarded to Bob to display this exhibit at UVic. As a co-curator (with Bill Zuk) of the A Wilfrid Johns Gallery (MacLaurin building), Bob felt this would provide a good space and would be interested in following up once a date has been secured. Nadine left a message on Lisa Mitchell voicemail regarding possible links with Soma Morse's work with children's art, and the CGAF visions, exhibits, and events.

*Related Note:* Roselynn Verwoord is wondering if we could use the A. Wilfred Johns gallery at some point this year, to put up a display of the artwork (as a collection) - a request that will be raised at our November 25 board meeting.

### 12. Related Global Arts Story: The Art of War - Children's drawings illustrate Darfur atrocities.

The art teacher at Joe Karmel's school (King David High) passed along the following article and access to children's artwork from Darfur/Sudan:

*By Dr. Annie Sparrow (pediatrician) and Olivier Bercault (lawyer) - researchers for Human Rights Watch*

In February 2005, we traveled to camps along the Chad-Sudan border that are home to more than 200,000 refugees from the genocidal conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan. During interviews with refugees, we gave paper and crayons to children, so they could draw whatever they wished while we talked with their parents and caretakers.

The first child, a 12-year-old shepherd, had never held a crayon or pencil before, so he gave the paper to his brothers, who drew, without any instruction, pictures of mounted Janjaweed shooting civilians, Antonov planes dropping bombs on civilians and their homes, and a tank firing on fleeing villagers.

Over the following weeks, these violent scenes were repeated in hundreds of drawings we collected from children aged 8 to 17 who had fled from many areas across Darfur. Children drew Janjaweed assaults on villages and Sudanese forces attacking from Antonov planes, MiG planes, military helicopters, and tanks. They also pictured the attacks as they had seen them in action: huts and villages burning; shooting of men, women, and children; and the rape of women and girls.

The children's drawings construct a compelling case against the government of Sudan as the architects of the Darfur crisis and explicitly show violations of the laws of war. To hear and read the testimony of victims of atrocities is very powerful; it is even more horrifying to see such mayhem through the eyes of children, uncoached and often uneducated but clearly exposed to brutal ethnic cleansing.

Refer to [www.slate.com/id/2122730/slideshow/](http://www.slate.com/id/2122730/slideshow/) to see a slide show of Darfur children's drawings.

### 13. Acknowledgment

*The Children's Global Arts Foundation would like to thank all who have helped support the expanding number of Friends, Projects and Initiatives. In this endeavour we have been as honeybees to flowers, drawing from each of us what is necessary to pursue our vision. To all the flowers in the field, we say thank you!*





