

Children's Global Arts Foundation
3rd Board Meeting Minutes and Updates
September 15 2006

Members in attendance: Jeffrey Pitcher, Gita John, Geoff Spriggs, Bob Dalton, Joe Karmel, Nadine Cruickshanks

1. Greetings, introductions, wine & cheese (& juice and snacks)
2. Approval, Follow-up and News related to July 4, 2006 minutes

a) Langford Fire Department & Global Arts in Afghanistan: **“Paintbrushes & Firehoses” Update from Geoff Spriggs:** 12-14 good size boxes of art and art supplies have arrived at the Langford Fire Department. These include drawings from Sundance Elementary School (Victoria); gently used art supplies; Postcard Art from ART of Peace Festival (**Rose Marie Cipryk** in Ontario); and other materials that have been sent through a Toronto firefighter connection, and other random donors. Geoff feels the global arts DVD has spread far and wide [rhizomatic-like] and as a result their department has been receiving (and welcoming) art-related donations. These donations along with medical and sports equipment will be added to their \$450,000 worth of firefighting equipment - A 6 bay fire hall filled with supplies will be shipped to Kabul, Afghanistan once the size and weight dimensions have been recorded for shipment. All the supplies (art, medical, sports, and firefighting equipment) will be transported to Kabul through the Canadian Military, and shared among the communities of Kabul and Kandahar (sometime in October 2006). A shipment of firefighting equipment from Finland will arrive in Afghanistan at a similar time - along with a television crew from Finland who will follow the story. Geoff will also be traveling to Kabul in October and will help to administer artwork relations upon his arrival. The Rotary club in Kabul as well as Kabul firefighters and their children, will provide Geoff and colleagues with good school connections for artwork exchanges. Nadine also passed along information about Roshan Thomas, principal of Kabul Sparks Academy (a global arts link established through Sheila Jiwan).

News from Kristen Munoz (from Sundance Elementary): Kristen, her husband, and daughter collected supplies from 4 schools in Victoria. Cartage School District 61 transported supplies to Langford Fire Department. Kristen is very satisfied with the wonderful response and success of the gently used art supply donations. Strawberry Vale Elementary School PAC donated \$200 - Kristen purchased new supplies with the money and sent these along to the Langford Fire Department. She will send information about schools involved in art supply and monetary donations (in September) - a thank you note will follow

b) Political sensitivity discussion - How should we respond to political questions related to global arts and Canadian military involvement?

From Geoff's direct experience, the Canadian military have been happy to help with the facilitation of the Global Arts initiative in Afghanistan through their transportation and delivery services. They look forward to getting into the schools (a nice reprieve to patrol duties), and they are happy to do it without feeling any subtle pressure to tell a story with a political or particular agenda (no other interest than delivery). Geoff also mentioned that the Langford Fire

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Department maintains a “hands-free” - no hidden agenda approach with Afghanistan and this is a primary reason why they keep getting invited back.

Bob Dalton has also observed that there is no evidence of propagandization in the children’s artwork from Afghanistan, or any suggestion to show that the Canadian Military utilize the global arts initiative as a propaganda tool directly or indiscriminately through global arts instruction with school children or facilitators. To follow-up with Tim Hopper’s and Jeffrey Pitcher’s words from last meeting, as children’s art does not cause the wars or aggression in Afghanistan, and may in fact decrease violence through art exchanges and awareness, we should acknowledge (and be thankful for) the Canadian military’s “postal service” support without feeling that we are supporting “military” actions.

c) Cindy Moyer’s promotional flyer

Nadine informed the group that Cindy Moyer would be willing to add a second page to the Foundation’s promotional flyer. It was decided that although a second “list of priorities” page would be useful, for now a “less is more” approach may be best for getting the word out and generating interest. All agreed that the Iraq artwork and layout that Cindy chose were very eye-catching and informative.

d) Are we ready for media attention? Nadine reminded the group of Rob Shaw’s (Victoria Times Colonist newspaper reporter) interest in the global arts initiative. It was felt that this may be a good time to contact Rob to let him know about the unique, unusual, and serendipitous connections that have emerged - in particular the Langford firefighters, child artists from Victoria and Kabul, School District 61, Victoria schools, teachers, families, Canadian military, etc... A trip to the Langford Fire hall to witness the shipment of art supplies and to learn of all who have been involved, might be newsworthy material. Bob thought of a few titles “The Odd-Couple” and “From Firehoses to Paintbrushes”.

Follow-up: Nadine will contact Rob Shaw from the Times Colonist. Geoff will be in touch with CFX. Gita also mentioned that Saanich News might be interested in such a story.

e) Fund-Raising: Nadine reiterated the Foundation’s appreciation and acknowledgment of people-to-people connections, time, and involvement for the ultimate sustainability of its mission and goals. It was also recognized that the CGAF does have some funding needs and goals, and appreciates **Lois Harvey**’s time and commitment in helping to secure funds. Lois has put out a call to the Friends of the Foundation regarding funding leads and priorities, and she appreciates the couple of links she has received and is open to pursuing others if anyone has suggestions. The following were mentioned at a previous meeting: charityvillage.org; [legacies 2010](http://legacies2010.org); BC Arts Council; and Alberta Heritage Fund

Funding Goals: Protection, framing, codifying, and transportation of children’s artwork; presentation and workshop costs; technology upgrading (to accommodate multimedia website); partnership expenses; art supplies (where needed); operational costs; and finances to bring child artists together from around the world. Support for a “Children’s Global Arts Learning Center” is also a goal. Any leads would be helpful and can be forwarded to Lois:

derrick_harvey@hotmail.com

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Art Holbrook is also pursuing funding for a national film on the Global Arts initiative. Denise Savoie (our local MP) spoke with Art at our summer picnic/ball game. Denise expressed support for the project, and asked Art to keep her informed about the film and to let her know how her office might be able to help with such a wonderful initiative. Geoff Spriggs mentioned that the Langford Fire Dept. also has connections with Denise's office, and could help reinforce and support the project through their contacts. Nadine passed on Art's request for a central character(s) to build the global arts story around. The links between Heather Coey (Victoria high school) and Munira Hassan (Kurdistan high school) was mentioned as well as Geoff Spriggs and the Langford-Afghanistan connection. The group was excited about the film prospects and looks forward to Art's updates in this regard.

f) **Accounting Update:** Joe Karmel informed the group that we now have a VanCity credit union account. So far we are pleased with the service and their interest in supporting the Global Arts Foundation. \$250 has been deposited (BCTF purchase of 12 DVDs, plus other DVD conference donations). With the initial shareholding and incorporation fees, at this point we are breaking even. Gita John will send us further funding connections at VanCity.

g) **Bob Dalton's famous "traveling art display"** has expanded to two display boards to accommodate presentation and exhibition needs (especially in Oct. 2006 - see attached for list of events). Bob mentioned how he has reinforced the display with duct tape and this seems to be working well. Joe Karmel attached a piece of foam board to the outer layer (to protect the visible artwork) and also wrapped the display with tarp paper and straps in order to transport it to Vancouver (in the rain). Joe suggests that we seek out the making of travel bags (waterproof with a shoulder strap) for easy transport of Bob's traveling art displays.

h) **Global Arts Website: www.childrensglobalarts.ca:** Nadine mentioned that the global arts website is alive and well, and informed the group that Tim Hopper acknowledges and appreciates Karen Chester's offer assistance with "front-line web news" and that he will contact her shortly regarding website support.

3. Other Correspondence: Nadine expressed the expanding and serendipitous nature of correspondence she has received since our last meeting in July, and expressed her appreciation to Joe who has assisted in organizing the copious amount of notes. Although all contacts are important and have been (or will be) followed up, time did not allow for the discussion of all correspondence. * **Key notes from all correspondence were handed out to board members and are included as a "other correspondence" attachment.**

4. Upcoming Conferences & Presentations: The group discussed the range of events that have been planned for the upcoming year (* **See attachment "Events & Conferences"**). Nadine inquired if anyone was interested in presenting (or co-presenting) at any of these events.

a) **Victoria LifeLong Learning Festival (Sept. 30 - 10:00-4:00):** Arrangements are underway for a global arts display/promotion table and a "graffiti-style" hands-on artwork area at Centennial Square. Jeffrey Pitcher offered his services for this event, and Roselyn Verwoor (at a

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previous meeting) offered to help out between 10 and noon. Nadine and Joe will also be present throughout this event.

b) Nadine and Roselyn Verwoor will co-present at **UVic on October 2, 2006**

c, d, & e) The **3 conferences in Vancouver/Port Moody on October 20** are being arranged with presenters Tim Hopper, Roselyn Verwoor, Joe Karmel and Nadine. It was acknowledged that conference coordinators have offered to cover travel expenses for all 3 events.

f) **“Artists of Conscience” Exhibition (Month of October):** Nadine acknowledged Susan Underwood’s help in facilitating connections with Kim Crowell from the “Artists of Conscience” Victoria International Art Symposium. Geoff Spriggs also mentioned the connections they have with the key coordinator for this event, and the interesting intertwining links that are emerging between the Langford Fire Dept. and the CGAF. Children’s artwork from Iraq, Afghanistan, and India will be exhibited at SilverThreads Community Center throughout the month of October. A promotion table will also be set up in the market booth during the 4 day conference (Oct. 27-30). Bob Dalton is greatly appreciated for his help in preparing the artwork and display boards for this exhibit, and Tim Hopper for his artwork installation assistance on September 19. Volunteers for the 4 day event (to sit at booth) would be appreciated - please contact Nadine.

g) **BCTF Global Education Conference, UVic** - no arrangements to date

h) **Art Exhibition in Lake Cowichan** - arrangements underway with Darlene Tully

i) **Greater Victoria Teachers Association - tri-district pro-d: Feb. 16, 2007:** No arrangement to date. Geoff Spriggs offered to co-present

j and l) **Children’s Festival (May 2007) & Royal Roads EcoFest (June 6-10 2007):** Nadine acknowledged Cindy Moyer’s support in establishing links between CGAF and coordinators for two upcoming events: Colin Gorrie from the Vancouver Island International Children’s Festival (Juan De Fuca), and Ara Parker from the EcoFest:The Spirit Bear Project (Royal Roads). Nadine met with Ara to discuss GA involvement at EcoFest and will be meeting with Colin in the near future to discuss involvement at the Children’s Festival.

Nadine asked the group how they felt about promoting an environmental “world we live in” and “world we want” theme to support the visions at EcoFest. Bob mentioned that up until now the art has centered on humanitarian conflict, and an environmental theme might be good. Gita felt that an environmental theme is wonderful, and would like to see a focus on the children’s local environment - their garden, their own space in nature, etc. She recounted how in her own family, in a discussion centered about post-earthquake needs, the importance of knowing the location for a supply of fresh water. Geoff thought this might be a good theme to bring into the artwork he hopes to bring back from Afghanistan - although it is difficult to make any decisions at this stage, he will keep it in mind throughout his travels and experiences in Kabul.

k) **Global Arts conference in Calgary (Spring or Fall 2007)-** no arrangements to date

5. Artwork Initiatives and Exchanges

A handout of all past, present, ongoing, and future global arts initiatives was handed out (***See attachment “Exchanges & Initiatives.”**), and Nadine brought the group up to date regarding current projects (see below). Joe inquired as to how to ensure that students are allowed the freedom to be authentic in their artwork responses and not become part of another “cookie-cutter” “standardized” approach to education. Bob advised to approach an art exchange like “pen pals communicating” - Rather than a grand scheme to save the world, an exchange is a simple gift-giving, where each child gives (or shares) a part of themselves through art. Nadine shared some of the views of those she has interviewed such that children are sending a message, an idea, or knowledge about the world, to someone else through art. Students could be asked to explore and find the best way (the best medium) they feel they can get their message across (i.e. through painting, music, quilting, theatre, games, poetry, etc.). Students seem to identify with, and to become more interested in, art experiences that have a purpose other than “creating a craft” - particularly when it involves an exchange of messages and ideas with others.

a) **Afghanistan Artwork - Phase 3:** Geoff mentioned that he hopes to arrange for a 3rd set of art brought to be back from Afghanistan. Bob mentioned that another exchange with Afghanistan would allow him to compare the trajectories and help to gauge and understand the changes within the country (2003-2005-2006). Bob also commented on some of the differences that he has observed between the art from overseas and local (western) art. These observations had to do with the colours, quality, and perhaps the time and effort spent on the art projects. The art from overseas indicated a great deal of time and patience had gone into creating many of the pieces.

b) **From Island to Island:** Jeffrey referred to the art exchange between Braefoot Elementary School in Victoria, and Jambiani community in Zanzibar. Tie-dye t-shirts and greeting card (idea and card created by Jeffery) are in the hands of Pat Elias (Hands Across Borders) who will ensure they arrive to the graduating class of the Jambiani School, Zanzibar, Tanzania. A relationship will be continued between children at Braefoot and Jambiani village (through a banner, fund-raising (Braefoot School), and other artwork ideas generated over the year. Nadine will visit Braefoot School on September 21 to assist teacher/facilitator Debbie Linnell with recruiting parent involvement in this initiative.

Challenge for Pat Elias: Where to successfully fit “Global Arts” in Jambiani community: Jambiani School - run by a corrupt and militant principal - no time, space, commitment, or resources to include global arts projects; Jambiani Nursery Schools - initiated by community members and vibrant, noncompliant teachers who left the school/system; and/or School of Tourism in Jambiani (new endeavour underway through Hands Across Borders)

c) **Lake Cowichan and Vietnam Friendship Village Artwork Exchange:** Nadine explained the exciting artwork exchange that is emerging between children from Vietnam Friendship Village and Lake Cowichan Community Services. We are excited about this new connection and appreciate the many people involved with the facilitation of this project: Darlene Tully (Lake Cowichan); Dang Vu Dung (Director of Village); Brigette Mueller (Germany Village board member); Carol Stewart (Canadian board delegate); Michelle Mason (President of Canadian

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board); Ida Giordano (Victoria resident-traveling to Vietnam). Carol will take Global Arts DVDs to the Vietnam Friendship Village; Ida has offered to transport artwork from Vietnam to Victoria; Michelle will send us information and her documentary about the Village. Nadine suggested that the viewing of this documentary may take place at a future meeting.

d) **Kurdistan and Victoria Artwork Exchange:** Nadine mentioned that global arts connections in Kurdistan Iraq have been maintained through Zhiyan Ahmed. Heather Cohey (Reynolds High, Victoria) and Munira Hassan (Shahid Jabbar English Exemplary School, Kurdistan, Iraq), have been in contact and are establishing an artwork exchange between their grade 8/9 students.

e) **“We Are All Related” New Delhi & Calgary artwork exchange:** Children’s artwork from “Bloom Public School” in New Delhi, India, was available for viewing at the meeting. Roselyn Verwoor - a UVic student and Friend of the Foundation - has recently returned from teaching and working in New Delhi. As part of an art exchange between children at Erin Woods School (grades 4/5) in Calgary, and children at Bloom Public School, Roselyn has been a key facilitator for this “We Are All Related” artwork exchange. Jana Sharon is presently facilitating the creation of artwork with her grade 5 students at Erin Woods. Arrangements for an exhibition in Victoria and artwork transportation to Calgary and New Delhi is underway.

f) **Arbutus Middle School Initiative:** Jeffrey mentioned that he is in his first year of middle school at Arbutus (Victoria), and that he will pursue plans with the principal to initiate a global arts project at Arbutus. Jeffrey shared a “quilting” idea with the group and Gita let Jeffrey know that her daughter “Maggie” is also a first-year student at Arbutus and that she could link them up for this project if he liked. Jeffrey thought that would be good and would look forward to working with her.

g) **King David High School, Vancouver:** Joe mentioned that he has initiated a global arts project at the current school he teaches at in Vancouver, King David High School. His students are excited about the prospects, and have many diverse ideas of how to share their messages of “the world they live in” and “the world they want”. One student has inquired about an exchange with a school she knows of in Jerusalem, Israel that has both Israeli Arab and Jewish students attending. Joe will pursue this further. He has also transported one of Bob’s display boards to King David to share art with students, staff, and parents this coming week.

6. Charitable Status - should we pursue?

Nadine asked the group if attaining charitable organization status is something that we should pursue. Both Geoff and Gita expressed some of the benefits of doing so. Nadine and Joe will proceed with the paperwork.

7. Board Member Profiles and Portfolios

Jeffrey brought in his profile and portfolio and shared it with the group. Nadine reminded all board members who have not already done so, to send in a digital picture and short profile and portfolio. A reminder to Tim Hopper to send in the pictures that were taken at our second board meeting (at UVic).

8. Other Business??

a) Nadine passed along **Paul Scrivner's** (Director of Community Arts Council of Greater Victoria) regrets that he must resign from our Board (due to family and work pressures). He assures us that the CAC wishes to continue partnership with the CGAF and perhaps create a project together for their Arts in Education Program. Paul will contact us once grant-writing is complete (end of September)

b) Nadine shared **Naz Rayani's** Times Colonist article: "A bridge to understanding" and relayed the wonderful tour that he offers to the **Islami Jamatkhana Centre in Burnaby**.

*** For an update of his upcoming tours contact Naz: ynr@shaw.ca**

c) Gita mentioned that a **Power of Hope "Creative Facilitation Workshop"** is being offered in late October, 2006 in Victoria, B.C. Gita and Nadine (who attended this workshop last year) recognize the strong links between this workshop and Global Arts as it provides teachers, youth, and facilitators with the creative tools for bringing out the creative potential that lives inside all of us, as well as artwork related ideas for global arts projects and initiatives. *** If anyone is interested in attending or learning more of this workshop, contact Gita: gitanjalijohn@yahoo.com**

Closing:

Nadine thanked everyone present for their on going work and support. Our next board meeting will be scheduled in November, and she hopes that everyone will come out and celebrate the season and continue the conversation. To close, we tasted "tute-fruit?" - a small and delicious, pine-cone-like dried berry that Geoff Spriggs brought us from Afghanistan.