



Fact Sheet

4 July 11

Our nation's increasingly complex problems cry out for creative solutions. But creativity is in short supply and may become scarce if not nurtured in childhood.

A 501(c)(3) nonprofit, the International Child Art Foundation (ICAF) has served since 1997 as the art and creativity organization for American children and their international counterparts.

The ICAF's concerted efforts to foster children's creative development re-ignite American ingenuity and lay the building blocks for intercultural understanding and collaborative innovation.

The Children



Child artists in Uganda
Nigeria

India
Sri Lanka

and in Washington DC

“Children are the world’s most valuable resource and its best hope for the future.” - President John F. Kennedy

Mission

To employ the power of the arts for the development of children's innate creativity and intrinsic empathy – preconditions for a better world.

Approach

- Provide free innovative programs and creativity- enhancing experiences that engage children to explore their world and their place in it
- Develop programs that grow imagination (Arts Olympiad), reduce violence (Peace through Art) and remediate suffering (Healing Arts)
- Publish a world class, ad-free periodical for children's creative development
- Break prevalent stereotypes by introducing children to the “artist-athlete” ideal of a creative mind and healthy body
- Produce the World Children's Festival every four years in Washington, DC as America's international children's event that integrates art and sport with STEM disciplines to provide early training for children to become creative leaders in their communities, prepared to collaborate for innovation and positive social change

“What you are doing reflects such a refreshingly integrated view of children's development -- a much-needed perspective in a time when children's growth and learning often seem to be approached in a very reductionist, fragmented way.”

- Dr. Martha Farrell Erickson, Director Harris Programs, Center for Early Education, University of Minnesota

The Arts Olympiad

Every four years the ICAF launches the Arts Olympiad, a cost-free program for 8- to 12-year-old children in all communities dotting the globe. Commencing in classrooms with structured lesson plans, the [Arts Olympiad](#) introduces students to the 'artist-athlete' ideal of a creative mind and healthy body. Children are inspired to visualize their favorite physical activity, render it in a thoughtful work, and pledge to exercise more frequently to overcome obesity risk.



Owen Omozore (age 10, New York) and Nellija Teilane (age 8, Latvia)

"The ICAF is bringing children together from all corners of the world regardless of race, ethnicity or religion in the name of art and bright future ahead of us. During the last few years I have succeeded a lot both in art and science, thanks to the support and encouragement from your organization."

- Angel Alexiev (age 14) California Arts Olympiad winner

World Children's Festival

The first-ever national children's art festival in U.S. history was hosted by the ICAF in 1998 on The National Mall in Washington, DC. Since 1999 the ICAF has hosted the [World Children's Festival](#) (WCF) every four years as "Olympics" of children's creativity and co-creation. Traditionally held on the National Mall, the WCF has grown into the largest international children's celebration and a permanent quadrennial event in our Nation's Capital.



"Through the World Children's Festival, I have learnt that winning was NOT the goal. We are not living alone. A Chinese character representing "person" is a letter with two lines supporting themselves, which tells us that no one lives alone... There are still piles of problems ahead for me, but ICAF and WCF taught me to have confidence and that language was not the only way of communication. The differences in race, religion, politics, etc. do not interfere in friendships, especially if one is a child. Therefore start young, and the participants will realize that the call for Peace and Friendship is universal." Rune Kondo (age 17) Japan

Exhibitions

The Arts Olympiad provides communities the opportunity to celebrate the creativity of their children through art exhibitions. The [interactive exhibitions](#) develop empathy invoked through art and team spirit instilled by sport so the children can become collaborative innovators.



Clockwise from top left: ICAF events in Kampala, Sharjah, Jerusalem, Turin, Munich, and Tokyo

“For all of us, the beauty and thoughtfulness of these works offer powerful evidence of the breadth and depth of the global conversation that is cultivated and perpetuated through children’s art.” - Jessica Hoffmann Davis, Director, Arts in Education Program, Harvard University

Peace through Art

In response to the September 11, 2001 tragedy, ICAF developed an innovative methodology that inspires children to use their own creativity to end the perpetuation of trauma and hatred. Field-tested in a program that brought Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot youth to Washington, D.C. for three weeks of training, the methodology was published in 2006 in UK's leading medical journal [The Lancet](#).



Nathania Candra (age 8, Indonesia); Soema Abdullaeva (age 12, Tajikistan); and mural by American, Malaysian and Omani children

“I spoke about the ICAF and its mission as part of my D’var Torah, highlighting the connection between creativity and peace building. I am a very creative kid, and I really appreciate all that the ICAF does. I enjoyed discussing its mission and making it a part of my Bar Mitzvah. I explained to my friends and family how the ICAF encourages kids to create a better world through their own creativity and talked about how creative kids are more likely to become creative thinkers and leaders. I think this is what becoming Bar Mitzvah really means.” - Matt Wilson, New Jersey

Healing Arts

Based on the knowledge and experience gained from the treatment of child survivors of the September 11, 2001 tragedy and other disasters, the ICAF launched a program in January 2005 to aid child victims of the Asian tsunami. Later that year, the ICAF's art therapists applied their tsunami experience and knowledge to help children affected by Hurricane Katrina in the U.S. Gulf Coast. The Healing Arts Program in [Chile](#) helped the children in June 2010 to cope with the earthquake trauma. American children at the World Children's Festival 2011 made "encouragement art" for child victims of the earthquake/tsunami in Japan.



Works created right after Katrina by 11-year-old U.S. Gulf Coast residents – Darin Martel, Breanna Paige, and Joshua Santamore

Special Needs

Many children never have the opportunity to make art unless presented with the Arts Olympiad experience. Forty-four students with physical and mental handicaps at the Spring Branch Independent School District in Houston, Texas participated in the 3rd Arts Olympiad. The organizers, Jody and David Butler, had traveled to Greece and Italy to study ancient sculptures and their relationship to modern Olympics. Children participated in twelve activities that combined art and sport. USA Track & Field 2000 Olympian, Eric Thomas, presented awards to the “artist-athletes.”

Under the 4th Arts Olympiad in 2010 the Maryborough Special School in Queensland, Australia organized the program for its special needs students. A 48x36-inch framed canvas was divided into 48 equal squares, on which every child painted his or her favorite sport.



L to R: A disabled girl lying flat to paint on canvas; Olympian Eric Thomas with “artist-athletes”; and a disabled boy creating art

Children's Panels at Major Conferences

The ICAF brings children voices to major international conferences that focus on the [future](#).



Clockwise from top left: Cyrus Alexander Jalinous (age 13, Washington DC) presenting at the World Cultural Economic Forum 2008 in New Orleans; the panelists with Louisiana Lt. Governor Mitch Landrieu; the young panelists with H.E. Amr Al-Dabbagh, Chairman of the Global Competitiveness Forum in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia; and Nick Goyette (age 14, Mississippi) presenting at the GCF 2010.

Published since 1998 without any commercial advertisement revenues or support, the quarterly ChildArt magazine serves as a teaching tool to foster children's creative and empathic development.



Past contributors to *ChildArt* include:

Nane Annan
Dr. Terry Barrett
Eric Carle
Dr. B. Stephen Carpenter, II
Christo and Jeanne-Claude
Chuck Close
First Lady Betty Ford
Jane Goodall
Major General Gaylord Gunhus
Dr. Mira Reisberg
George Rodrigue
Patricia K. Shinseki
Carol Tanenbaum

"Not only is this professionally-produced magazine both visually and intellectually engaging in content and design, it offers a cogent reminder of art's central role in linking world cultures, each to each. For its poly cultural outlook and special focus, *ChildArt* is unique among magazines for children, but readers of any age will find it a rewarding way to broaden their cultural horizons."

- John Peters, Supervising Librarian, Central Children's Room, The New York Public Library

World Children's Award

At the World Children's Festival the children present their creative leaders the World Children's Award. The 2011 Award, designed by [Karim Rashid](#) in New York City and produced by [Freedom of Creation](#) in Amsterdam, was presented by the children to the W.K. Kellogg Foundation for its dedication to the welfare of children.



ICAF Calendar

Mar 2012	Arts Olympiad Exhibition at the Kanazawa 21st Century Museum, Ishikawa Prefecture, Japan
Jun 2011	4 th World Children's Festival, The National Mall, Washington DC
Jun 2010	Chile Healing Art Program
Jan 2010	ICAF International Children's Panel, Global Competitiveness Forum, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Jan 2010	ICAF Children's Masterpieces Exhibition, Hewar Art Gallery, Kingdom Center, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia
Nov 2009	ICAF presentation, National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) Annual Conference, Washington, DC
Sep 2009	ICAF presentation, "Towards a Future World Without Violent Radicalization" Conference, Banten, Indonesia
Mar 2009	ICAF Katrina Art Exhibition, Education Without Borders, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Mar 2009	ICAF presentation, World CEO Forum, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Nov 2009	ICAF presentation, Aspen Cultural Diplomacy Forum, Paris, France
Oct 2008	ICAF International Children's Panel, World Cultural Economic Forum, New Orleans, Louisiana
Oct 2008	ICAF Katrina Art Exhibition, Central Military Club, Sofia, Bulgaria
Jun 2007	3 rd World Children's Festival, The National Mall, Washington, DC
Mar 2007	ICAF National Co-sponsor, Arts Advocacy Day, Washington DC
Oct 2006	ICAF Katrina Art Exhibition, Museu da Cidade, Lisbon, Portugal
May 2006	ICAF European Children's Festival, Olympia Park, Munich, Germany
Mar 2006	ICAF Arts Olympiad Exhibition, United States Sport Academy, Daphne, Alabama
Mar 2006	ICAF presentation, UNESCO World Conference on Arts Education, Lisbon, Portugal
Mar 2006	ICAF keynote address and Arts Olympiad Exhibition, International Society for Education through Art Conference, Viseu, Portugal
Sep 2005	ICAF Arts Olympiad Exhibition, XIII World Congress of Psychiatry, Cairo, Egypt
Jun 2005	ICAF presentation and Arts Olympiad Exhibition, 10 th Cybertherapy Conference, Basel, Switzerland
Jun 2005	ICAF presentation and Arts Olympiad Exhibition, The Cumberland Lodge, The Great Park, London, United Kingdom
Apr 2005	ICAF presentation, AAHPERD National Convention and Exposition, Chicago, Illinois
Dec 2005	ICAF co-sponsor, "Destruction, Reconstruction, and Prevention Program", The World Bank, Washington, DC
Nov 2004	ICAF presentation, "Visual Culture of Childhood Conference", Pennsylvania State University, State College, Pennsylvania
Oct 2004	ICAF Children's Utopia Exhibition, "Utopia Station", Haus der Kunst, Munich, Germany
Apr 2004	ICAF presentation, World Summit on Media for Children, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Mar 2004	ICAF Co-sponsor, "Chinese Children's Art on the Environment Exhibition", Capital Children's Museum, Washington, DC
Oct 2003	ICAF Co-organizer, "Innovation in Education Conference", The Qatar Foundation, Doha, Qatar
Sep 2003	ICAF Arts Olympiad Exhibition, The World Bank/IMF Annual Meetings, Dubai, United Arab Emirates
Sep 2003	2 nd World Children's Festival, The National Mall, Washington, DC
Sep 2003	The Mayor of DC issues a special proclamation for ICAF dedicating September 11 as <i>Children's Peace Day</i>
July 2002	ICAF Peace through Arts Exhibition, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC
Sep 2000	ICAF First Ladies Forum on Children, United Nations Millennium Summit, New York Hilton, New York, New York
Dec 1999	ICAF Arts Olympiad Exhibition, The White House Millennium Celebration, Ronald Reagan Building, Washington, DC
Jun 1999	1 st World Children's Festival, The National Mall, Washington, DC
Sep 1998	ICAF ChildArt USA Festival, The National Mall, Washington, DC

Impact

Since 1997 ICAF has served as the national art and creativity organization for American children and as the international art and creativity organization for the world's children.

- The Arts Olympiad has expanded in scope to become the world's largest and most prestigious program for children's creative development
- The World Children's Festival has evolved into the "Olympics" of children's creativity and co-creation and a permanent quadrennial event on The National Mall in Washington DC
- The United States Olympic Committee has granted the ICAF an exclusive license to use "Arts Olympiad" and related marks, and the USOC is an insured party at the WCF
- ICAF is respected internationally as a pioneer in deepening public awareness of the importance of children's creative and empathic development
- To date over 5 million children worldwide have participated in the Arts Olympiad and the ICAF's other programs, exhibitions and educational festivals

"I believe that you have developed this wonderful program to inspire youth to tap into their creative talents, empathy, and self-expression in quite a powerful way. I truly resonate with the festival and organization you have created - and even more so, I resonate with what I hear as the underlying reason you have done this work. The arts as a bridge to peace, empathy, understanding - as a link between cultures, traditions, religions, classes - all the labels that we humans have created to tell ourselves that we are separate and unequal."
- Mariah Miller, founder, Kids for PEACE, Madison, Wisconsin

Come Join the Creativity Revolution

- Be an advocate the importance of creativity and empathy as key attributes for successful learners and leaders as ICAF volunteer: [volunteer\(at\)icaf\(dot\)org](mailto:volunteer@icaf.org)
- Shape the future with a tax-deductible donation today by mail or online www.icaf.org/support
- Sponsor a *Multimedia Exposition for Creative Education* in your community or corporation
- Subscribe to the *ChildArt* magazine for a creative child and your neighborhood library or school

Discover ICAF and contact us then with your creative ideas or questions: [childart\(at\)icaf\(dot\)org](mailto:childart@icaf.org).
Remember, in a symphony of change every voice counts and your very action is important.

