

## Children's Testimonials



From April-May 2011

A climax of my life occurred in the summer of 2007, at the third quadrennial World Children Festival. This event, sponsored and hosted by the International Child Art Foundation, was a much successful attempt at growing fresh flowers in the minds of the next generation – building the artistic creativity of today's children. I was one of the latter.

Stanislav Nedzelskyi (age 16) Texas

Artistically ICAF also helped me to be more creative. I saw how the other kids had different techniques and I started trying them myself. Everyone at the WCF drew and painted amazingly, each unique in their own way. My love for art was once again brought to life as I spent a beautiful week at the WCF 2007. I started painting since then and I love painting whenever I get inspired.

Marifer Aguirre Broca (age 17) Aruba

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 then, the participants will realize that the call for Peace and Friendship is universal.

Rune Kondo (age 17) Japan

The day I was introduced to the art community (a sunny summer midday, as far as I remember), a whole new universe opened up in front of me. I soon realized we were all very different from each other, but at the same time we had so much in common. That was the best way to describe the atmosphere that was built at the World Children's Festival. Actually, in spite of the many obvious cultural and idiomatic differences among us (distinguishable at first sight through the diversity of costumes and complexions), such divergences never really meant an obstacle in terms of communication. On the contrary, they truly encouraged the exchange of ideas, of feelings, and souvenirs; even our age, I think, contributed greatly to reinforce the fluency of such relations. The fact of not only taking part of the same organized activities, but also of meeting each other in the most common of situations (in the street, at meals, even in the elevator or across the corridors), was clearly one of the most important aspects of our lives during the Festival; the encounter with others became an everyday event.

Alejandro Goldzycher (age 20) Argentina

Looking backward on my experiences there, I can hold it responsible for shaping the young adult I am today. Being creative is something innate in us as humans, but for the first time, in Washington, I was shown its utter importance. The coming together of an international host of people from all walks of life to celebrate creativity may seem irrelevant to more serious or pressing world causes, but there I learnt the impact of empowering a generation. This event builds leaders, through

esteeming children to think, debate and learn from one another through the medium of art. It felt incredible to be taken seriously by adults who were genuinely interested in my art, and its legacy is in the way children will go forward with the confidence to propose change, take themselves seriously and live with conviction in their own abilities. These are the ingredients for the future movers and shakers.

Ella Gordon-Latty (age 20) New Zealand

#### From 2007

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for inviting us over to Washington, U.S.A. I had wonderful experiences and memories brought home with me. I met fellow young artist like me and I hope we stay in touch for a long time. The mural painting was a fun experienced especially working with those young talented artists. Although we do not speak the same language, we all shared the same interest and we all have it by heart. Everybody was happy to finish the painting. There was no big role or small role. It made us all happy and real proud to be a part of a beautiful art work. The whole World Children's Festival experience was amazing. The workshops really opened my eye...

Jerrika Shi (age 10) Philippines

I had never created murals together with children before; so at first, I was nervous. However, when I started sketching, I began to enjoy this activity very much. I found it not too easy and not too difficult working with them. Since I have been studying in Vancouver, I know how to speak English fluently and luckily most of the kids whom I was working with, could at least understand a little bit of English. Even though I was their 'leader', I did not want to take over the whole mural. I told them they could explore and do what they wanted. I could feel that they suddenly expressed themselves more. We were 'crazy' playing with paints and it was a great fun activity for us.

Sisylia Candra (age 17) Indonesia

During the festival I worked with a lot of kids. I think art has got only one language, as in music. Notes in music, colors in art. Hence it wasn't difficult to understand each other.

Narmina Veliyeva (age 18) Azerbaijan

It was a great experience for me to be like a teacher for the children. It was a little bit hard at the beginning, but I started to paint and show them what to do. I understood that the art is a universal language. We don't have to be the same nationality, or to talk the same language so we will understand each other.

Claudia Ligia Suteu (age 17) Romania

#### From 2004

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

From 2003

It was an experience I will never forget! Amazing, colorful, wonderful and life-changing event for me.

Carmen Ortiz (age 12) Louisiana

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.

Anguel Alexiev (age 14) California

From 2000

I thought I could be with ICAF all my life, like being a volunteer

Giada Kuka (age 13) Albania

The atmosphere created by ICAF at the festival with workshops held by famous artists and the making of new friends influenced me to continue drawing and painting.

Tamara Mamedova (age 12) Azerbaijan

I really enjoyed working on the U.S. Mural. It was one of the best experiences of my life!

Jenna Skophammer (age 11) Iowa