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**Event: Unite With Art Auction and Gala**

**Date:** Wednesday, June 3, 2009 **Time:** 6 pm – Midnight

Silent Art Auction begins at 6 pm / Live Auction begins at 8 pm

**Venue:** Former Storyeum in Gastown, 151 W. Cordova St., Vancouver

**Tickets:** \$150 Purchase online at [www.unitewithart.com](http://www.unitewithart.com) or by calling UNICEF at 604.874.3666 ext. 8125

**Information:** [www.unitewithart.com](http://www.unitewithart.com)

**UNICEF announces 2<sup>nd</sup> Unite with Art Auction and Gala**

***Benefiting UNICEF Canada's Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign***

**Vancouver, BC** – May 6, 2009 - Each and every day, 1,800 children under the age of 15 are infected with HIV; most of these children are newborns. Every two minutes a child under the age of 15 dies of an AIDS-related illness. Millions of children and young people around the globe are at risk and in need of protection.

In an act to put children on the global AIDS agenda, in 2005 UNICEF and its partners launched the *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign. In June 2008 the **Unite with Art Auction and Gala** was created to raise financial support and bring awareness to the campaign. More than 350 of Vancouver's art collectors responded to this need and raised \$276,000 for the cause. The event was the brainchild of Julie Lee, Arthouse Gallery Director and Unite with Art Executive Director, as well as Alison Lawton, Chair of UNICEF's *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign.

UNICEF Canada President and CEO Nigel Fisher is pleased to announce that the 2<sup>nd</sup> **Unite with Art Auction and Gala** will take place on June 3, 2009. "Roughly 15 million children under the age of 18 have lost one or both parents to AIDS and millions more have been affected by it. The suffering of children is the world's greatest shame. It is unnecessary – but there is hope," said Fisher. "The **Unite with Art** event will raise funds for the *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign—a campaign that is global in reach and global in action."

The **Unite with Art Auction and Gala** will run from 6pm - midnight at the former Storyeum in Gastown. A spectacular evening of art and advocacy, the gala will feature silent and live auction items of 90+ donated works from acclaimed artists, including, Fred Herzog, Chris Jordan, Greg Girard, Angela Grossmann, Gabryel Harrison, Christian Nicolay, Joe Fafard, Annie Pootoogook, Brent Comber and David Wilson, among others. The event will also feature local designers including Obakki, Omer Arbel, LemonPark, Michael Gotziaman, John Fluevog, Kelly Deck, and Inform Interiors to name a few. The evening will include a cocktail as well as a dessert reception featuring live entertainment and cuisine by the city's best restaurants.

"I am absolutely delighted that such an incredibly diverse group of individuals has united once again for another fabulous evening," states Lawton. "We are unbelievably fortunate to be surrounded by such wonderful artists and designers who have joined with UNICEF and donated their work to support this worthwhile cause."

*Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* is the largest campaign ever initiated to bring attention to the impact that HIV/AIDS has on children and youth. UNICEF's goal is to halt and begin to reverse the spread of the deadly disease by 2015 through efforts to expand health care services and prevention measures. Proceeds raised from the **Unite with Art Auction and Gala** will benefit this campaign.

The **Unite with Art Auction and Gala** fundraiser takes place Wednesday, June 3, 2009 at the former Storyeum in Gastown starting at 6pm. Tickets are \$150 and may be purchased online at [www.unitewithart.com](http://www.unitewithart.com), or by calling UNICEF at 604.874.3666 ext./poste 8125.

### **About *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS***

The *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign aims to provide support, care, protection, and treatment to millions of children afflicted with HIV/AIDS, so the spread of this pandemic can be halted by 2015. The campaign builds on UNICEF's already extensive work for children's health and focuses efforts on four key areas:

- Prevention of mother-to-child transmission of HIV;
- Providing pediatric treatment;
- Protecting and supporting children affected by HIV and AIDS;
- Providing information and services to adolescents and young people so they have the knowledge they need to prevent infection.

Through fundraisers such as **Unite with Art** and the generous donation of time, resources, and money by participants, UNICEF can achieve its goal of reaching 80 percent of children who have been affected by AIDS, and reducing the global percentage of young people living with HIV by 25 percent globally. UNICEF is determined to make this the last generation of children to bear the brunt of AIDS.

### **Fast Facts**

- More than 6,000 young people aged 15 to 24 are newly infected with HIV everyday.
- Nearly 2.3 million children under the age of 15 live with HIV, mostly due to mother-child transmission.
- A child under the age of 15 dies of an AIDS-related illness every two minutes of every day.
- More than 15 million children have lost one or more parents to AIDS; over 12 million of these children live in sub-Saharan Africa.
- Only 23 percent of HIV-positive mothers are receiving medicines that will help their unborn child from contracting HIV. UNICEF's goal is to provide appropriate services to 80 percent of HIV-positive women.
- *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* is the largest campaign ever initiated to bring to the world's attention the impact that HIV/AIDS has on children and youth.
- The campaign aims to halt and begin to reverse the spread of HIV/AIDS by 2015, through efforts to expand health care services and prevention measures.