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UNITE WITH ART RAISES MORE THAN \$460,000 FOR UNICEF AT CONTEMPORARY ART AUCTION AND GALA

Sold-out gala evening raises more than \$460,000 for UNICEF Canada's
Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign

Vancouver, BC – June 9, 2010 – More than 350 art lovers and AIDS advocates gave generously on Thursday, June 3rd at the third Unite with Art Auction and Gala, raising a record \$460,000 for UNICEF Canada. Proceeds of the sold-out gala and art auction will go to UNICEF's *Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS* campaign.

Held at Maynards Fine Art and Antiques on Main Street, more than 90 works of art were donated to the auction by some of the country's hottest contemporary artists, including Robert Marchessault and Gabryel Harrison, whose works fetched the highest bids of the evening. Actor Tara Spencer-Nairn, of "Corner Gas" and "New Waterford Girl" fame, hosted the event and kept the crowd upbeat and laughing throughout the evening.

Entrepreneur and social innovator Alison Lawton, who chairs UNICEF Canada's Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign got the evening off to a glorious start by pledging \$100,000 to the cause and challenging four others to pledge \$25,000 each to match her bid, raising \$200,000 before the auction had begun.

"It was a magical, wonderful night," said Julie Lee, executive director and curator of Unite with Art. "We are so grateful to the artists, our sponsors and all those who gave from their hearts in support of Unite with Art and UNICEF. The event connected people – artists, art lovers and advocates – all united for the cause, and for children affected by HIV/AIDS worldwide."

Coming out for the cause were singer Sarah McLachlan, pioneering AIDS researcher Dr. Julio Montaner, Chris Wong, Chair of the Board, UNICEF Canada, renowned architect Russell Hollingsworth, gallery owner Jennifer Winsor Zed and Dr. Christopher Zed and Treana Peake, owner of Obakki, a donor to the event.

Nineteen year old singer/songwriter Ali Milner, who will be performing at the Lilith Fair concert in Vancouver wowed the crowd during the reception with her sultry voice and magical piano styles, while Alpha Yaya Diallo brought an African vibe and groove that had the well-heeled crowd dancing in the aisles.

Fabulous food was served by some of Vancouver's hippest restaurants, including Wild Rice, Habit, Nuba, 12b, Revel and The Refinery with delicious desserts from Daniel Le Chocolat Belge and Les Amis Du Fromage.

"With an estimated 2.1 million children under 15 years living with HIV and AIDS worldwide, this is the most devastating health crisis of our time," said Chris Fong, Chair of the Board for UNICEF Canada. "We are extremely grateful for the tremendous support shown through the *Unite with Art Auction and Gala* that will help UNICEF continue to provide children and families affected by HIV and AIDS with the help they need."

About Unite with Art www.unitewithart.com

Launched in 2008 by Julie Lee and Alison Lawton, Unite with Art has become Vancouver's premier contemporary art auction and gala event. Through the generosity of artists, sponsors and supporters, nearly three quarters of a million dollars has been raised for UNICEF's Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS.



About Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS www.uniteforchildren.org

The Unite for Children, Unite against AIDS campaign's mandate is to fight against this pandemic by supporting, caring, protecting, and supplying treatment to millions of children and adolescents. These children have fallen victim to this deadly disease the world over, reaching from sub-Saharan Africa, Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, Asia, to the Americas. The impact is devastating, but there has been progress made: UNICEF reports that nearly half of pregnant women worldwide (up from 10 per cent in 2004) now have access to antiretroviral treatment to prevent mother-to-child transmission of HIV. Continued efforts to expand health care services and prevention measures will enable UNICEF to achieve a goal that will see a future generation of children living in an AIDS free world.

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