

Sculptor advances the causes of children and women through "Mother's Love"

By Marge Francia

For Seb Chua, an award-winning sculptor, creativity is a journey in discovery. He believes creating artworks is a special moment, even made more special when it is born out of a noble desire to help others.

Chua's desire is becoming a reality as he is using his creative talent to save the lives of women and children. His creation, "Mother's Love," is UNICEF's symbol for its national campaign to better their plight. The cold cast bronze sculpture of a breastfeeding mother cradling her child is a touching symbol of the intrinsic bond between mother and child.

Chua is now producing 100 limited edition sculptures of "Mother's Love." Proceeds from their sale will go to UNICEF's work of improving the capacity of health facilities in the most disadvantaged communities to ensure the safety of mothers and newborns. At present, roughly 10 Filipino mothers die everyday giving birth. Through improving the services and equipment in health facilities, many of those mothers can be saved.

"I really wanted to help and have the chance to do something for UNICEF from the start. Our export company receives regular mailings to request for donations, but I think that it's more fulfilling as an artist to contribute to UNICEF using my talent aside from just giving money because it's sharing your talent and skills for a greater purpose," Chua reveals.

The award-winning sculptor seeks to bring forth the best in Filipino art and sculpture through figures interpreted in a very modern, abstracted style. A graduate of UST Fine Arts and Columbia College in Canada, he immerses himself in his love for art apart from being at the helm of product research and design for his family business.



"The wealth of artistic imagination, the pursuit of excellence, and the lofty goals at the very foundation of his art practice, Chua has amply proved that artists can indeed shine even after making a living in another profession so long as they are armed with the passion and the mission to sail forth, create meaningful art, and ultimately attain what they have originally set out for art's greater glory," art critic Gino Dormiendo describes Chua's genius.

Chua has exhibited in galleries such as Art Asia and Artwalk at SM Megamall, and is the recipient of an honorable mention in the Art Association of the Philippines' (AAP) 2006 annual exhibit.

For this collaboration with UNICEF, he hopes to "give children the chance to live and have a healthy life," giving mothers and children a better chance at survival through an artwork celebrating the miracle of creation.

"I consider every work unique, every art original. These are precious and priceless moments that would leave a legacy. It would be an even greater legacy if it is connected or was born out of the noble desire to help others, especially the children," he concludes.

The collector's piece is available at Art Asia Gallery, Fourth Floor, SM Megamall Building A, and will be among the show pieces in Chua's exhibit on August 1, 2008 at 6:00 pm in the said venue. For inquiries, please call (02) 634-5945 or through UNICEF at (02) 901-0154 or visit www.sebchujr.multiply.com.

Background

Everyday, hundreds of children and mothers die because of complications related to pregnancy, childbirth, and early childhood illnesses. This year, UNICEF reported in its flagship publication, "The State of the World's Children Report" that close to 10 million children died before their fifth birthday in 2006.

In the Philippines, many mothers give birth outside a health facility, under unsafe conditions, and without the help of a skilled health worker. In 2007, UNICEF supported the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) to study the status of children and women in 24 provinces and cities in the Philippines. The survey reveals that nine out of 10 mothers in these locations had at least one prenatal care visit. However, only 54 per cent of deliveries were attended by skilled health workers. In 14 provinces, the rates were below 50 per cent. Three-fifths of births were delivered outside a health facility. Mothers who successfully give birth are then faced with the task of keeping their babies healthy and free from sickness. Alarmingly, seven out of ten children who do not reach their fifth birthday are infants, and half of the under-five mortality happens within the first month of life.

A Spark of Hope to Help the Poor

By Milena Quiaoit

I am a ten-year-old incoming grade six student. Last school year, my classmates and I had a project where we explored and tried to understand what poverty is and its causes. We looked into what poor people do to make their lives better and the different organizations that help reduce poverty. We also found other places in the world where poverty exists, and the similarities and differences between the poor and the rich.

We went on several field trips to places like Smokey Mountain, Gawad Kalinga Baseco, Pasig River, Puroks One, Two and Three in Taguig and interviewed a lot of people. We attended the "Living on Loring" exhibition, and taught in a daycare center. We even experienced some of the things that the poor do to make a living like selling fruits and vegetables, and driving pedicabs. We organized some fund-raising activities such as a garage sale and a bake sale for the communities at Smokey Mountain.

My school project moved me so much that I wanted to continue helping the poor. I began noticing things that did not matter much to me before—like beggars, street vendors and shanties. Each time I see a vendor on the streets, I would ask money from my parents so I could buy whatever they were selling to help them out. After a while, my parents told me that I

couldn't just keep giving money unless I started a business.

So I did. I thought of selling iron-on-labels for clothing. My friend from Japan gave me iron-on-labels as a present. These are labels with your name that are ironed on to the back of clothing. They are usually used for laundry sorting at our home. Before we used these labels, our socks and undershirts got mixed up most of the time, and the people in my household end up having an uncomfortable day at work or at school! The labels also come in very handy at school, identifying my uniforms.

With the help of my family, I started my small business by finding special paper from the U.S. and then I searched for designs to make our labels attractive. When I sell these iron-on-labels, I pledge I will donate ten percent of the proceeds to SparkHope.

I first found out about SparkHope when my dad gave me a Starbucks planner three Christmases ago. At that time, I really didn't know much except that Starbucks raised funds for SparkHope to help the poor. It was only through our

school project where I learned that SparkHope provides early education to children that live in barangays adopted by Starbucks stores. Since one of the most important things I learned was that education is the most common way to escape poverty, SparkHope is the charity of my choice.

I wish more schools will have the same type of project so that kids will be aware about poverty at an early age, and hopefully, they will do something to help out too.



The author at a local Starbucks store



Children First

THE NEWSLETTER FOR UNICEF FRIENDS

JUNE 2008

DRINK FOR 2: SM, UNICEF join hands to bring clean water to Masbate children

By Randy Jay Solis

If children from the island province of Masbate can each have a chance encounter with a magic bottle of three wishes, what would they wish for?

Clean water and running toilets will definitely be on top of their lists.

"And no more fetching water every morning," adds Alex Lobitana, grade 5 student from Dacu Elementary School in Mobo, Masbate.

"Madalas kaming umihi at dumudumi sa mga damuhan, dagat, at kung saan-saan. Hirap din kami sa pag-igib ng tubig (We relieve ourselves in the grassy areas, the ocean, and elsewhere. We have a hard time fetching water.)," says Alex.

Sadly, there are children in Masbate who have no choice but to drink from pools of contaminated water and even seawater. This is perhaps the most unfortunate irony for the



Masbateño child considering that the land is surrounded by water and yet there exists scarce access to safe, clean water. The result of this is a range of deadly water-borne illnesses.

In the municipality of San Pascual, which has a population of around 40,000, intestinal infections, parasitism, malnutrition, skin infections and related complications claim the lives of approximately 3 to 4 children a week. Diarrhea kills up to 14 children a month in this community.

To help counter the occurrence of tragic child deaths caused by diarrhea, UNICEF supports the building of water and sanitation systems in Masbate and in other target areas across the country. UNICEF also teaches children and their families about proper personal hygiene and sanitary practices, which are as important in preventing child death.

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Students at Dacu Elementary School are ecstatic about how the water and sanitation project has improved personal hygiene and health practices in their communities.

play because we're no longer sick all the time.," says Alex.

"Sana, maranasan din ito ng iba pang mga bata (We hope that other children will also experience this)."



SM lends a hand

The SM Supermalls is hoping to do just that. This year, SM joins hands with UNICEF to help more children in Masbate obtain access to safe drinking water and have better sanitation facilities.

SM has pledged to donate at least Php 2M through proceeds from the sales of the SM distilled drinking water. For every purchase of SM bottled water, which is sold

in all SM Supermalls nationwide, a donation of 25 centavos goes to UNICEF. This small amount is enough to give two children in Masbate access to safe drinking water for one day.

The fund will help in the construction of facilities and provide technical and capacity building assistance to 100 households and six primary schools with 1,500 children in a Masbate community.

The SM-UNICEF project offers an opportunity for ordinary people to take part in an extra-ordinary cause. "Buying bottled water is a simple act of giving two other children the chance to have safe drinking water for one day. Just imagine if all of us can give this chance not just for two children and not just for one day, but for some 1,500 Masbate children for the rest of their lives," said Hans Sy, president of SM Prime Holdings Inc.



FUND ALLOCATION REPORT: Making Every Donation Count

By Colin J. Davis, Deputy Representative for UNICEF Philippines

One of the things we at UNICEF really enjoy doing is sharing the good news with our donors about the money you have contributed to continue protecting the welfare and rights of children in the Philippines. Indeed, we take a great deal of pride in accounting for every peso that goes to vital programs on education, health and nutrition, policy work, and protection of children from violence and exploitation.

We make each and every peso of your donation count. After all, your hard-earned money has made our work for children possible. Our accomplishments on the field are your accomplishments. The heartfelt thank yous that children express after receiving the medicine and school books they urgently need are not directed to us but to YOU. As my colleagues and I always say, UNICEF can never do this challenging work alone—we rely entirely on the voluntary support of donors like you to get the ground work going.

This brief report, really, is the story of your love for the Filipino children. So as you read through it, I hope you experience the same pride and joy that my fellow staff and I feel in the realization that more and more children are being saved, nurtured and protected.

But as there is still a lot of work to be done in order for these young ones to be completely free from abuse and neglect, I hope to count on your continuing commitment to the Filipino child in the years to come. If you wish to send now another donation to UNICEF, you can do so by filling up the business reply form that comes with this newsletter.

Together, we can make this country a better place where children can thrive and enjoy their rights to the fullest. Thank you so much for giving disadvantaged children in the Philippines the chance to live safer, healthier lives.

YOUR DONATION WENT TO (funds raised by UNICEF donors from January to May 2008)

Please allow me to report how your funds were allocated to various UNICEF programs:

Education

Php 4.8M funded the establishment of pre-school classes for at least 500 children in 15 indigenous communities and the provision of early childhood care and development (ECCD) learning packages and training materials in these indigenous areas.

Php 2M went to the building of an ECCD day care center in Baseco which opened in time for pre-school classes this June 2008. Donor funds amounting to **Php 950,000** provided supplies and reading materials to various schools nationwide while the amount of **Php 1.4M** has helped us obtain 4 mobile ECCD centers so that more young children in certain areas of Manila and Davao can have easier access to day care education.

Health and Nutrition

More children in the Philippines get to stay healthy, nourished, and safe from preventable childhood illnesses through our programs on de-worming and salt deficiency, which received funding support from individual donors like you amounting to **Php 3.1M** and **Php 2M** respectively.

Child Protection

A total of **Php 1.24M** funded an entire program on protective services for children affected by abuse, exploitation and trafficking. These services include the provision of educational supplies and vocational skills studies for at-risk and vulnerable children; and counseling, medical and welfare assistance for the recovery and healing of child abuse survivors.

To continue protecting the legal rights of children and improve the justice system for them, UNICEF utilized donor funds worth **Php 1.25M**. This amount provided essential supplies and medical care for children who have been transferred from adult jails to a youth rehabilitation center; education and life skills training for former children in conflict with the law; and aftercare support for children returning to their families. These funds have also made possible the establishment of Children's Justice Committees in barangays for the latter to handle community-based diversion programs.

Days of Peace

Children in the war-torn communities of Mindanao are now given a fighting chance in life, thanks to the overwhelming support of donors like you who have collectively raised **Php 3.39M** for the Days of Peace program. Remote areas previously inaccessible due to armed conflict can now receive life-saving vaccinations and other essential drugs that will help reduce the under-age 5 mortality rate—while thousands of children in over 300 tahduriyas (Islamic pre-schools) can enjoy the benefits of early learning and be prepared for primary education later on.

Masbate's Literacy Program for Mothers

One of the poorest provinces in the Philippines, Masbate continues to receive the much-needed support from our donors. **Php 64,300** funded training for female functional literacy classes, which aim to teach illiterate mothers in Masbate to read and write and to take better care of their children. Our corporate partner Timex has turned over **Php 510,000** for the construction of a day care center in the community of Sitio Catindoy, Masbate.

Hats off to you, our dear donors, for working together to raise **PHP 20.76M** in the first half of 2008. On behalf of the Filipino children, please accept our thanks and appreciation. Marami pong salamat sa tulong ninyong lahat!

PROGRAM	TOTAL RAISED FROM JAN-MAY 2008 (in Php)	
Education	9,150,000.00	44%
Health and Nutrition	5,140,404.94	25%
Child Protection	2,505,746.16	12%
Days of Peace	3,391,781.91	16%
Masbate (Area-Specific Theme)	574,300.00	3%
TOTAL	20,762,233.01	100%

If you want to know more on how you can donate to UNICEF, please call us at (02) 758-1000 or email psrmanila@unicef.org.



From our donors, with love

Our work here in UNICEF becomes so much more fulfilling every time we hear inspiring stories from our donors. We cannot thank you all enough for the kindness and thoughtfulness that you have shown over the years.



Kristine Enriquez

We received a letter from Mrs. Ma. Teresa Enriquez of Bacolod City, who had a simple request for her daughter Kristine. She was requesting us to send Kristine, who was turning 11 on May 22, a UNICEF greeting card as a birthday gift.

What made this seemingly ordinary request so special for us was discovering in that letter that Kristine had decided to celebrate her 11th birthday, not by holding a party with family and friends, but by asking her mother to donate to UNICEF whatever money would have been spent for her birthday.

It is already humbling to hear about grown-ups foregoing a few luxuries in order to give something back to the community—more humbling still to learn about a child who gave up the prospect of enjoying a fun-filled birthday and chose instead to help her less fortunate peers. For us, the twenty-second of May does not simply mark a kind-hearted little girl's birthday but also symbolizes a birthday of sorts for all the children who were able to receive food, medicine and shelter, thanks to Kristine. A truly red-letter day across the country.

We raise our hats to Kristine, a real UNICEF angel!

Here's an excerpt from a letter we received from Ms. Violeta Yuzon of Quezon City:

"I wish I could give more but this small amount of Php500 comes from my heart.

I am a cancer patient under a 5-year medication program, but I am very much concerned for these children under your care. I hope my little contribution will help alleviate their suffering."

Dearest Ms. Yuzon,

We at UNICEF sincerely thank you from the bottom of our hearts for your donation and for your heartwarming letter.

Your contribution—which you deem so little—is actually a significant amount that will go a long way in improving the situation of children who have been given a second chance at life. With your monthly pledge of Php500, you are helping these young ones receive the proper care, education and nutrition that they deserve, as well as giving them the opportunity to learn life skills that will better equip them for the future.

Your unselfish desire to help other people in the midst of your personal struggles in life is truly an inspiring example of how genuine love and concern can be found not just in the familiar company of family and friends but also in the hearts of strangers who are willing to help at a moment's notice.

Underprivileged children in the Philippines are fortunate to have you as one of their 'guardians'!

We want to hear your thoughts or stories on helping the children of the Philippines! Send an email to psrmanila@unicef.org.

Drink for 2
Buy SM bottled water and save 2 children in Masbate.

Every bottle of SM Distilled Drinking Water you buy gives 2 children in Masbate safe drinking water.

Because an act of charity can create ripples of hope.

unicef 50 years

SM Distilled Bottled Water is available in 500 ml bottles in all SM Foodcourts, selected restaurants and food kiosks in all SM Supermalls.

