

Peace through Art and Sport

Ashfaq Ishaq

Since September 11, 2001, our world has become increasingly divided. The escalation of religious, ethnic, and cultural conflicts is having a profound impact on the hearts and minds of the next generation. The arts are language-independent media for building bonds of friendship and communication among the world's children. Collectively the arts are a powerful catalyst for promoting peace, freedom, and cooperation. Likewise, sports are also a powerful tool for building peace.

Peace and Children

In the year 42 AD, the Roman philosopher Seneca observed that world peace will be secured on a permanent basis when we start teaching our children to view the whole world as one: "Omnis orbis terrarum patria mea est." (The whole world is my own native land.) Never in the last two thousand years, have governments emphasized this philosophy of peace in any school curriculum. Linking peace with children, Mahatma Gandhi counseled, "If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children."

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recognizes that the instinctive capacity for creativity and imagination found in young people has often been denied or suppressed in their education, and

Art and Sport

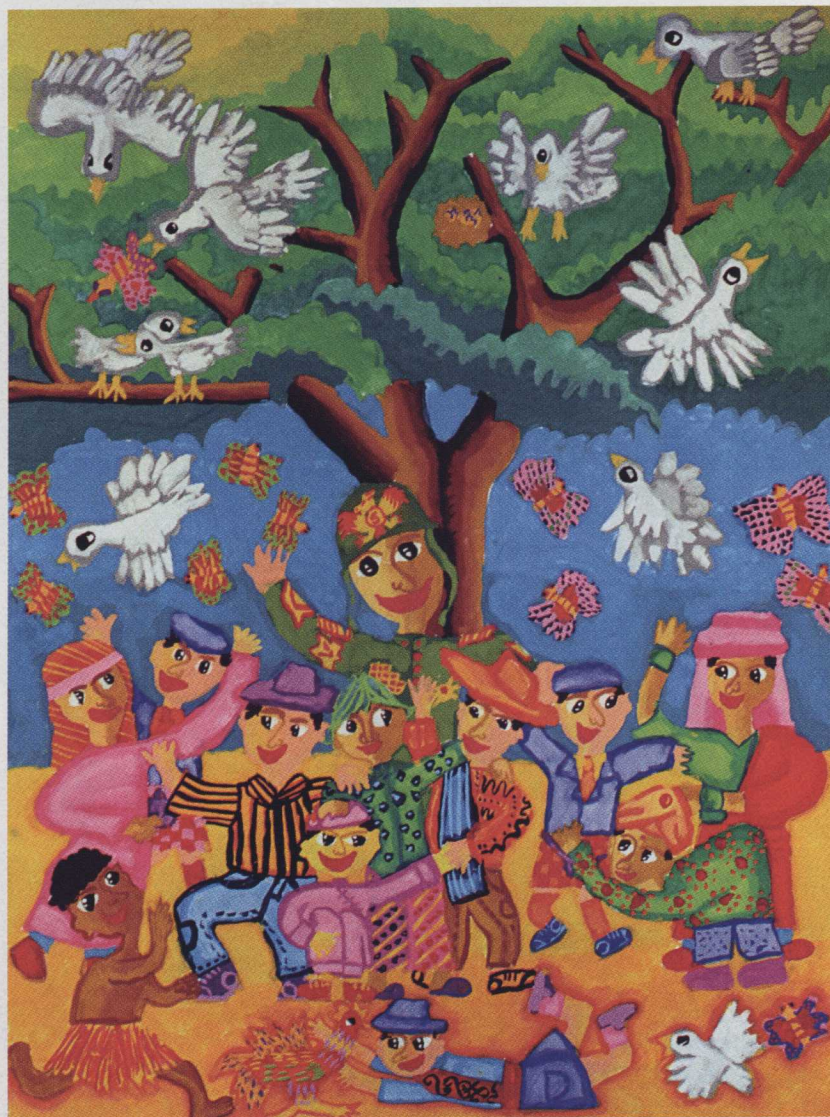
In ancient Greece, beauty and strength were considered qualities of the ideal person. Out of the stadia and the arenas, a new citizen arose who aspired to attain an all-around development of the body and mind.

Thus, Pythagoras, an eminent mathematician and philosopher, was a boxing champion at Olympia. Plato also took part in the games. Believing in the natural link between art and sport, Baron Pierre de Coubertin, father of the modern-day Olympics, sought to transform a simple athletic contest into an aesthetic-spiritual celebration.

ICAF's third Arts Olympiad (2004–2008) embodies Coubertin's dream—it brings art teachers face to face with physical education instructors and athletes, and hence, breaks old stereotypes and makes children realize that anything is possible, even the ability to become an artist-athlete.

The Arts

Olympiad combines the empathy and understanding invoked by art with the competitive energy and team spirit instilled by sport to promote creativity, health, and Olympic ideals. According to Nelson R. Mandela, Nobel Laureate and former



Fadhil Ahmade Qamar, age ten, Indonesia.

states that: "The encouragement of creativity from an early age is one of the best guarantees of growth in a healthy environment of self-esteem and mutual respect—critical ingredients for building a culture of peace."



The objectives of the Arts Olympiad are to:

- nurture children's creativity;
- promote physical education;
- cultivate the Olympic ideals;
- fight obesity and drug abuse;
- involve more boys in art and more girls in sport; and
- foster cross-cultural, inter-religious and international empathy and cooperation.

president of South Africa, "Art and sport have the power to change the world, the power to inspire, the power to unite people in a way that little else can. Art and sport speak to people in a language they understand. Art and sport can create hope where there was once only despair. They are instruments for peace, even more powerful than governments."

Festivals and the Olympic Games

ICAF and its national partners are responsible for organizing the Arts Olympiad and its events in their respective countries. These partners include ministries of education and culture, first ladies' offices and foundations, arts and cultural organizations, and in-country offices of UNESCO and UNICEF. Contributing to and promoting the Arts Olympiad are ICAF's educational partners that include the Congressional Arts Caucus. The Arts Olympiad is a UNESCO Culture of Peace Project.

For the United States Art & Sport Festival, ICAF is considering New Orleans as the host city for the winners of the 2005 art competition, their teachers, and parents.

In 2007, ICAF will host the World Art & Sport Festival on the National Mall in Washington, DC. Art competition winners and their teachers and

parents from each U.S. state will be invited to participate in this important celebration. Delegations from about 100 countries will attend. Moreover, ICAF is in discussion with the Beijing Organizing Committee

Conclusion

In late 2004, ICAF will begin distributing lesson plans to more than 50,000 schools worldwide, free of charge. Teachers will have the opportunity to use this project-based

learning approach for peace, health, and global education. They will organize art competitions and students will have a choice of media to express their creativity—painting, drawing, or digital art and photography. More than 100 countries are expected to participate.

In our global village, intense efforts spearheaded by concerned and motivated individuals and under a global framework are the most viable and effective. Working under the umbrella of ICAF, we can help the children lead us into a peaceful and better world. Albert Einstein reminded us that "no problem can be

solved from the same level of consciousness that created it." The Arts Olympiad is a new beginning.

(Continued on page 62.)



Diyera Khasanova, age twelve, Uzbekistan.

for the Games of the XXIX Olympiad (BOCOG) to integrate the Arts Olympiad with the Cultural Olympiad of the 2008 Olympics. Imagine your young artist taking you to China for the Olympics!

Continued from page 41.

How to Participate

ICAF has developed two comprehensive lesson plans for the 2004–2008 Arts Olympiad, one for schools and after-school programs in the U.S. and another for international teachers. The lesson plans provide: (a) a set of art and sport activities; (b) guidelines for an art competition on the theme My Favorite Sport; and (c) School artwork entry forms. The Arts Olympiad is open to all students ages 8–12, including home-schoolers. ICAF does not charge for its lesson plans or for entering the competition.

Two artwork entries per school can be sent to ICAF (or ICAF's partner organization in your country), one painting/drawing and the second digital art/photography. Deadline for entries is February 28, 2005.

Lesson plans can be downloaded from www.olympiad.icafe.org. For any questions, e-mail Amanda Kah, Arts Olympiad Manager, at Olympiad@icafe.org or call (202) 530-1000.

Peace through Art and Sport Methodology®


The 2004–2008 Arts Olympiad is based on ICAF's Peace Through Art & Sport Methodology, which provides a five-stage approach to global peace building:

1. Creativity and self-expression: Structured lesson plans for art teachers and physical education instructors, which provide a framework for art competitions on the theme My Favorite Sport.

2. Self-esteem and confidence: Teachers involve students in judging artwork and arrange exhibitions at local events to showcase children's creativity and boost their self-confidence.

3. National peace-building: Finalists from different provinces (or states) come together at national festivals, where they apply their own creativity to build a vision of peace and coexistence.

4. Regional peace-building: National finalists attend regional festivals, where they celebrate their national identities, alleviate tension through sport, discover their commonalities, develop regional pride, and depict it in a collaborative work of art.

5. Global peace-building: National finalists from around the world participate in the international festival, where they discover that the forces that unite are deeper than those that divide, initiate lifelong friendships, learn universal values, and receive leadership training. 

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