



ART FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Encouraging start for children's fund

Charity art auction raises a total of S\$30,000 for the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund

A painting of three dancing ballerinas caught Mr Edward Choy's eye when he was reading a story about the launch of the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund. The 48-year-old businessman felt a connection because he has three daughters and the youngest is also learning ballet. He bid S\$1,628 for it in his wife's name, as a surprise gift for his family.

Titled "Three Ballerinas", the painting was done by 10-year-old Lee Jing Xin, who aspires to be a performing arts teacher. It is one of 15 paintings that were part of an art exhibition and silent charity auction that was held in conjunction with the launch of the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund earlier this month.

DREAMS AND ASPIRATIONS

Based on the theme "My Dreams and Aspirations", the paintings were selected from the works of 30 children who participated in an art painting programme sponsored by OCBC Bank in August. The minimum bid was S\$500 and 12 of the paintings have each been sold for between S\$500 and S\$5,000 when the exhibition at OCBC Art Space ended on Oct 11.

More than S\$19,000 was raised from the auction and the entire sum will go to the fund, which aims to raise a maximum of S\$1.5 million every year — the cap is in place to help ensure that other charities can also benefit from the generosity of public donations.

OCBC Bank is committed to donating S\$500,000, giving S\$1 for every S\$2 raised. The fund focuses on the emotional needs of children from broken homes or distressed families, and will support the cost of therapy, counselling and life skills programmes for the beneficiaries of the Singapore Children's Society.

Ms Koh Ching Ching, Head of Group Corporate Communications, OCBC Bank, said: "We are heartened that the first art exhibition by the beneficiaries of the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund raised close to S\$20,000. OCBC will



From left: Executive Director of Kingsmen Ooh-Media David Tay, Megan Tan who painted 'The Designer', Lee Jing Xin who painted 'Three Ballerinas', Nicolette Choy, and Edward Choy.

PHOTO: OCBC

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Koh Ching Ching
HEAD OF GROUP CORPORATE COMMUNICATIONS,
OCBC BANK

match the amount with S\$10,000, making the total donation to the Fund S\$30,000 — not bad for a start.”

She added: “With S\$30,000, we can help at least two children with therapy and counselling for about 18 months. Every child we help today will become one adult who will contribute meaningfully to our society tomorrow.”

“This art exhibition is only the beginning of a series of fund-raising exhibitions at the OCBC Art Space that our customers and the public can enjoy while doing their part for charity.”

Mr Choy supports the fund's objective. He said: “Every child should be given opportunities to fulfil their dreams. This fund goes beyond physical needs and addresses a more critical area. The emotional state shapes a person's thinking and determines whether the child can emerge from a difficult family background.”

CORPORATE SUPPORT

The auction also received corporate bids. Kingsmen Ooh-Media bought a painting titled “The Designer” for S\$1,000. The piece was done by Megan Tan, 8, who said that she wants to be a designer when she grows up so that she can “draw colourful things”.

Mr David Tay, Executive Director, Kingsmen Ooh-Media, explained that being a communications design company and having a creative background meant they could easily relate to Megan's work. He said: “It's in line with our culture. We want to support her aspirations.”

The company has been working regularly with OCBC Bank on various projects, including the OCBC-TODAY Children's Fund launch event. It has its own adopted charity and also contributes to other causes. The OCBC-TODAY Fund was one that appealed to them as a “really worthy cause”.

Mr Tay said: “Children are the new pillars of society. Every single one of them deserves a chance, even if they come from a broken home. We want to play a part in enabling opportunities to these children.”

Mr Alfred Tan, Executive Director, Singapore Children's Society, said: “We are elated that the paintings done by our children have been successfully auctioned off. This show of support will go a long way in empowering our children and giving those involved a wonderful boost of self-esteem. This art auction raised close to S\$20,000 in just eight days and we are grateful to the individuals and companies who took part.”

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