



AME Press Kit EN

Philosophy

Art is an endeavor, which enriches life through emotions and stories for each individual. While it is clear that art gives meaning, can it, however, also educate? The organization Art Meets Education intends to do exactly that - children from impoverished backgrounds will be able to finance their own education through means of their own creativity.

Children are honest and terrific artists. They possess imaginative and experimental minds unbounded by rational adult thought. This naive creativity is what enables them to create incredible works of art, unharmed by society's values, rules and structures.

What AME does

Art Meets Education is an organization, which educates through photography. Here, children from financially disadvantaged backgrounds are given the opportunity to create their own works of art. The photographs that they create are placed in exhibitions and the proceeds generated from the sales of their art will provide the financial means for their formal education from primary school all the way up high school graduation. Our priority is to provide the tools for the powerless to empower themselves. To give these children the means to finance their own education forges the key to which they can use for a self-determined life, a life without poverty.

AME - An aid organization and a mediator of the arts

For Art Meets Education, photography serves not merely as a means of financing the children's education, but also as a medium through which the children can channel their feelings and daily experiences into a process of self-reflection. In many developing countries the varying natural gifts of children are increasingly neglected. They have become accustomed to obeying authority, performing extensive household work, as well as looking after their younger siblings. We're convinced that each child has an inner compass, which shows it the best path for them in life - be it an emotional, purely interest related, or a characteristic aspect. Our project grants children the space needed for independent work and thinking, which allows them to strengthen their own abilities and self-confidence.

In most cases, public schools cover tuition, however, parents are left to cover the costs of school uniforms, school supplies, lunch, books, as well as transport costs. The main target group of our project are children between the ages of five and nine years from families who wish to send their children to school yet lack the financial means to afford the external costs



listed above. The sad reality is that many children in developing countries meet these criteria.

To assure that the children successfully receive their high school diploma, it is important to us that we maintain regular contact with not only the parents, but the school as well. Furthermore, in order to guarantee extensive support and care for the children throughout all twelve years of their education, the project is limited to ten children. Help should not stop there though. It is our long-term goal to help procure the students with internships or apprenticeship positions following their graduation from high school.

The real help comes from within - The story of our beginning

Justice and sustainability are the main values which Art Meets Education embodies. Nico Klein-Allermann, born and raised in Germany, has a strong attachment to the Philippines through his Filipina mother. After studying photography and education, he initiated the first project of Art Meets Education in Manila - Olandes Marikina.

Photography is his life and profession. His interest as a freelance photographer includes socially and structurally discriminated people. In his works, one is confronted with the moving and gripping biographies of his subjects. Looking at his photographs, one inevitably becomes sensitized to the "lives of others". However, for Nico, simply moving people on an emotional level, which is often fleeting, was not enough. A moment of sympathy alone cannot change the lives of his subjects. Upon realizing that through his photographs alone he was not able to positively affect the lives of his subjects, he, together with Jana Seibert, established AME in December 2016.

Many people wish to somehow help make the world a better place. However well-meaning the intentions are, the endeavor often turns out to be a greater challenge than expected and fails starting with the most basic question of whom can be helped and more importantly, how. The foundation of AME is sustainability: AME strives for long-term changes. The only way we see, in which change can happen long-term is through education. Education is a necessary step towards self-reliance. Education enables breaking through hardened structures and living conditions - it is the first vital step towards a life with a future.

As a child, Nico travelled to the Philippines every two years to visit his relatives. There he often played with his cousin, Timothy, who lived in a slum next to his grandmother's house. In the slum, they would get something small to eat at a nearby barbecue stand. Running the stand was a boy the same age as they were named Jonny. As Nico turned thirteen, so did Jonny. Nico was already in high school. Jonny sold barbecue. When Nico turned nineteen, he received the highest level of a German high school diploma. Jonny still worked the barbecue stand. Today, Nico is an independent photographer, has a university degree, traveled throughout the world and experienced a tremendous amount. Today, Jonny is still standing on the same street corner, selling barbecue. Perhaps the greatest change in Jonny's life is



the addition of several of his own children. Before the first project in the Philippines was launched, Nico recalled that this awareness of his privileges - having access to education and the freedom to develop as a person - was the moment that everything changed for him. Nico's current successes in life are less about his innate creative skills and more about the simple luck of being born in a country that afforded him the opportunities to develop - unlike Jonny.

Equipped with only the hope to affect positive change and with a vision without a particular master plan, Nico managed to create the first project in Manila in August 2016 and ten children received the opportunity to finance their education through their photography.

From the street to exhibition

During the early phases of the project, contact is established with the school and the regional authorities through our project managers in Germany as well as locally in the slums through the local project manager and the field worker. Here is where the necessary partnerships and foundations for a long-term implementation of our goals are built. Selecting the participants is achieved through a set of criteria Art Meets Education created. Teachers at the school as well as field workers then suggest participants, which meet our criteria. Such criteria require that the child must be between the ages of five and nine years old. Of unimportance is the fact whether the child is already has gone to school or not. Another requirement is that the parents must not have the financial means to send their children to school. Furthermore, it is extremely important that the parents support the idea of their children getting an education, because without a positive attitude towards education, AME can no longer be of any help. In order to make sure that the child and family meet the criteria, there is a scheduled visit at the home of the parents and children, where an extensive interview is carried out.

Before the actual photographing begins, there will be a meeting with everyone involved. Here is where families and children have the opportunity to get to know one another as well as to once again be informed of the idea behind the project. It is at this point where the children take part in a photography workshop, which is led by a professional photographer, and become familiar with the important aspects of photography and the technical features of a camera and its proper handling. Concerning what the children photograph, AME sets neither borders nor guidelines - we essentially take a back seat to their creativity. Nonetheless, our team is there to accompany them to assist during the production process when necessary. After the conclusion of the production process, an interview is carried out, in which they express who they are as individuals and what aspirations they have in life. In this manner, each photograph is given a face and a story. What is astonishing is that much of what they express in the interview is frequently reflected in their photos. This illustrates that children have an inner compass, which guides them and in turn, deserves our fostering and support. After the children have returned the cameras, the pictures will be developed and viewed together with a member of a public authority. This is where the decision is made as to which



photos will be selected for the exhibition. Photos that show nudity, violence, or deny the dignity of the person photographed will be discarded and disposed of. From the beginning of the project up to its conclusion, close cooperation with the family is extremely important, in order to not only foster support between both parties, but to secure permission for the use of the photographs as well.

The next step after having made the selections from the children's portfolios is to create exhibitions for them in Germany. The selected motifs will be edited and, as is custom in the art market, framed, and hand-signed by the artists in a limited edition of five copies to be sold. In addition to the limited copies, there are posters and postcards, which will also be distributed and sold by AME. Important to us is to present a sense of proximity to the artists and their lives. As a result, portraits and interviews with the children will also be on display at the exhibitions.

Art becomes education

After half a year, we meet up once again with our young artists, whereupon all families of the children receive brochures and exhibition catalogues, in order to show what has been done with their artwork. Furthermore, it is also made transparent how the generated proceeds are being invested. Of importance is not only making sure that there is still interest from the families partaking in Art Meets Education, but also to inform the families in detail how the project will move forward. If there is still interest, a contract between AME, the parents, the child, as well as the director of the school and regional governance is signed. This contract serves to codify the rights and obligations of all participating parties.

The local project manager makes sure that school supplies are made available as well as assuring the child receives a warm meal each school day - both of which are financed from the proceeds of their sold artworks. During moments such as the handing out of school supplies, it is extremely important for us to establish contact with the children so that they are better able to strengthen their self-confidence. Put simply - without their cooperation, their interest in photography, as well as their creative potential, none of this would have been possible. In the end, the children have essentially financed their education by themselves.

The proceeds from the exhibitions make the financing for their education possible, which assures them schooling from primary school all the way through to their high school diploma. Having achieved this, they will have created the foundation for greater possibilities in life.

Vision

Art Meets Education is acutely aware of its responsibility: we help, aide, and support - and most importantly, for the long run. The project in Manila was the first milestone reached together with artwork buyers, donors and sponsors. Every year children will be given the



chance to finance their education by means of their own creativity. AME has established a foundation, through which new input is added to this structure on a daily basis. Ultimately, our long-term goal is to expand to other countries, whereby organizing and financing several parallel projects. It is our goal to have a collection of artworks at different locations in the world - putting on display the pieces created by the naive and innocent creativity of children from many nationalities.

Project report

The 2017 project *Manila - Olandes Marikina* was successful in financially securing the education of seven artists for all twelve years, including their high school diploma. Here, children were able to independently fully finance their studies through their photography. The project in the Philippines was the first milestone reached thanks to, artwork buyers, individual donors and sponsors.

The second project, *Manila - Olandes Marikina 2* was started in November 2017, which saw an additional ten young artists creating twenty motifs. The first phase of the project, *From the street to exhibition*, has since been completed and has allowed us to concentrate on the curation process. By 2018, all ten children will be enrolled in the Industrial Valley Elementary School in Olandes.

Donation

Art Meets Education e.V. is a non-profit organization whose goal is funding the education of children 100% through the proceeds of their sold photographs. In order to achieve this, we rely on donations, which serve to cover the overhead costs of the organization. This includes purchasing the photo equipment, printing and framing the photographs, as well as exhibition expenses. Thus, all donations go towards sustaining the organization, which in turn guarantees that all proceeds from the sold photographs go towards the funding of the children's education. If you like more information concerning the investments of your donation, please feel free to contact us at anytime.

Donation Account

Art Meets Education e.V.

Postbank

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ART MEETS EDUCATION

| Picture | Titel | Caption |
|---------|------------------------------|--|
| | John Vincent with his camera | John Vincent holding his camera for the first time |
| | Explaining equipment | Showing the kids how to use the cameras |
| | Interview | Interviews with the kids |
| | Camera equipment | The quiet before the storm: ten cameras, ten kids, endless films |



ART MEETS EDUCATION

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|--|-----------------------|---|
| | Arkin with her camera | Arkin is learning how to use the camera |
| | Aeron with his bike | Aeron taking pictures on his bike |
| | John Wesley's home | Visiting John Wesley at home |



ART MEETS EDUCATION

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|--|----------------------------|--|
| | John Vincent with brochure | John Vincent taking a look at our brochures |
| | First day of school | Industrial Valley Elementary School |
| | Arkin | Arkin at her first day of school |
| | Group photo | A group photo with the seven artists of our first project and their works of art |