

Exhibition: **CHILDHOOD.**
Photographs by Isabel Muñoz

IVAM Institut Valencia d'Art Modern
5th April – 26th June 2011

Curator: Manuel Blanco

Organized by: UNICEF

In collaboration with: Agencia Española de Cooperación para
el Desarrollo (AECID)

Childhood. Photographs by Isabel Muñoz hopes to make people aware of the reality and rights of children all over the world through 68 pictures and texts. The exhibition gathers portraits captured in 20 countries of Europe, Africa, Asia and America which, from particular cases, offer a global overview of their current situation. Isabel Muñoz has been awarded the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts 2009, Premio PhotoEspaña 2009 and World Press Photo 2000 and 2005. The exhibition has been organized by UNICEF in collaboration with the Agencia Española de Cooperación para el Desarrollo (AECID). On the occasion of the exhibition, a catalogue has been published with the photographs displayed and texts by journalists of El País Semanal.

Convention on the Rights of Child (1989) defines the basic human rights that children from all over the world have. This binding treaty has been adopted by 193 states, being the more ratified ever.

Isabel Muñoz (Madrid, 1951) is considered as one of the best and more politically committed Spanish photographers. Muñoz, by means of the portrait, approaches different cultures and reports unfair situations. Between her most well-known works, her series on *maras* of Guatemala, slavery, tribe of *surma* of Ethiopia and Sudan or the consequences of the earthquake in Bam can be emphasised.

The photographer has been recently awarded the Gold Medal of Merit in the Fine Arts. She has also been awarded the Premio Bartolomé Ros (2009) for the

best Spanish career in photography, PhotoEspaña (2009) and the World Press Photo twice (2005 y 2000 World).

UNICEF

The United Nations Children's Fund, UNICEF, was created in 1946, during the years following World War II. At present, it works in more than 150 countries and developing territories to achieve better living conditions for children and to ensure development opportunities for all of them.

UNICEF's programmes are based in Convention on the Rights of Child. UNICEF, which is the biggest supplier of vaccines in developing countries, works to improve childhood health and nutrition, adequate water supply and cleaning up, high quality basic education for all the children, children protection against violence, exploitation and HIV/AIDS.

The United Nations Children's Fund has been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize (1965) and Prince of Asturias Award for Concord (2006).

World childhood

Convention on the Rights of Child remains highly unknown and the rights included in it are far away from reality in many countries. Rights of children are ratified but not completely guaranteed, and even if an important progress has been achieved, there is still a lot to do.

Daily, the rights of millions of children all over the over are being broken and, as it is highlighted by UNICEF in its State of the World's Children Report, there are currently many challenges that are reflected in these figures:

- Almost 22.000 children under 5 years daily die for reasons that, for the most part, could be avoided.
- It is estimated that 150 million children aged between 5 and 14 are victims of child labour.
- 1 out of 5 teenagers in the world is not attending school (1 out of 3 in Sub-Saharan Africa).
- More than 50 million children are not registered at birth, sentencing them to remain invisible for the world.
- More than one million children live in countries or territories affected by armed conflicts.
- More than 4 out of 5 children live in countries where the rift between the rich and the poor is bigger and bigger, which shows that achieving rights of children is largely a matter of equity and social justice.

Manuel Blanco, architect, curator and designer of this exhibition is full professor of the Higher Technical School of the Polytechnic University of Madrid. From his studio in Madrid, he has been the curator and designer of several exhibitions understood as installations.

Involved in the project from the very first moment, he translates its aim of making people more aware of the rights of children creating an exhibition in which the photographs by Isabel Muñoz come to life and their main characters, standing on a real scale, mingle with the audience, establishing ties with it, explaining their lives and the rights that protect them.

The Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional para el Desarrollo (AECID), as an entity attached to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation through the State Secretary for International Cooperation, is the management authority of the international development cooperation policy of Spain. Its objective is to promote, negotiate and implement policies for international development cooperation aimed at fighting poverty and achieving a sustainable human development in developing countries.

The AECID works to make the rights of children equal all over the world, by encouraging the governments of the partner countries to protect the rights of children by means of effective legislation, promoting the participation of the children in an active citizenship and improving their basic rights such as the access to education, health and equality.