



**An Appeal from Dr Peter Carey (Chairman) and Catherine L. Geach (Founder)  
Kampot Traditional Music School for Orphaned and Disabled Children  
Khmer Cultural Development Institute**

Dear friends and supporters of our school,

Each year you have given to our school with incredible generosity and kindness of spirit. As founder and on behalf of everyone at our school, I cannot begin to express my gratitude, nor emphasise enough, how important your support has been in helping keep our school open and running. If you would like to help us again this year, you can do so on **Tuesday 28th November 2017** and then from **Wednesday 29th November until December 31st 2017**.

For all our details and why your help is so important, please read below:-  
**To Donate**, please click here:-

<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/education-arts-orphan-disabled-children-cambodia/>

The twenty children who are now resident at our school, range from age six to seventeen. Many of them are completely orphaned and have life-challenging illnesses, such as HIV, epilepsy and mental trauma. Some of them were severely abused by extended family and even sold into slavery. We have one child, a girl who lost her eye to physical abuse by one uncle and who was sexually abused by her other uncle. That is why we must take care of all our children in a safe, loving and happy environment.

Additionally of course, we now look after blind children and provide rehabilitative scholastic education using Braille, training in traditional Cambodian music and secretarial skills such as English and computer. We are still the only centre in the whole of Kampot Province to assist blind children. Much stigma is attached to blindness and people can be very cruel towards the less physically able. Learning real skills and becoming independent is so important for the well-being of our blind students. All our resident children receive full time care, schooling and high level tuition in traditional Cambodian arts.

We continue to give free arts lessons to disadvantaged and impoverished children from outlying villages. Many of them come from dysfunctional families with alcohol and gambling addiction problems. They thrive at the stability and opportunity our school gives them to learn and grow and to become professional musicians.

Our arts program continues to flourish. We teach Pin Peat, Mohori and Plein Ka music, classical Cambodian dance, folk dance, Yike (music, dance and theatre) and shadow puppet theatre. We also have more projects in the pipeline. We are helping organise the first Kampot Arts Festival to be held in January 2018.

Many of our artists are considered great masters (male and female) and survived the Khmer Rouge genocide (1975 -79). They have dedicated their lives to restoring their beautiful, unique heritage. The commitment and knowledge that they share at our school is invaluable.



So too the loving care given to our children by all our staff, but especially their housemothers. Each toothache, fever, grazed knee taken care of, each urgent health challenge cared for. Clothes washed, mended and folded away. Affection and advice. The loving care given to our little blind and deaf boy who wakes up in the middle of the night all *allegro*, because he thinks it is time to get up. Sometimes to receive the care they need, our children must be taken to hospital in Phnom Penh 137 kilometres away. We don't have our own car and we must share a taxi. There are times because of a health emergency that we will have to go to Phnom Penh three or four times a month and that is very expensive for us.

There has been an unfortunate trend in Western volunteering at certain orphanages, resulting in a large increase of fake orphanages. Despite the Cambodian government's successful efforts to close these orphanages down, the resulting fall-out has been that international organisations disapprove of orphanages and no longer provide funding. They promote foster care instead. Our experience on the ground has shown us that Cambodian society is generally not ready to give proper foster care and that children who are fostered out to extended family or other families, are often used as servants and treated as sub-human. Our local Department of Social Affairs also supports our view and have provided legal support for our school in cases where we have had to have legal guardianship to protect our children from harm.

We have therefore not received any significant support from any large NGO for the last four years and we keep our school going through individual donations.

That is why **Giving Tuesday** and our **Year End Campaign** are so important for us. We keep on going because of the precious help given at this time.

This year we will do two campaigns. The first is **Giving Tuesday** on the **28th November 2017** starting at 00.00.01 and lasting nearly 24 hours until **23.59.59 EST** (Washington DC time). On **Giving Tuesday** we will receive matching funds from Global Giving and if we manage to raise over

\$5,000 with twenty individual donors, we will receive a prize as well. Because the campaign only lasts 24 hours, only payments with credit/debit cards or Paypal will be accepted.

**The End of Year Campaign** then starts on the **29th November 2017 just after midnight EST** and lasts all the way until **December 31st 2017 23.59.59 EST (Washington DC time)**. This is considered a separate campaign and so if you wish, you can split your donation in two and donate half for each campaign. *Why?* Because again if we raise over \$5,000 but with forty different donors, we will win a prize as well. In this case because the challenge lasts longer, you can donate using credit/debit card, Paypal, Apple Pay, transfer and cheque (Cheques before the 20th December).

To **DONATE** for either Campaign. Please click here:-

<https://www.globalgiving.org/projects/education-arts-orphan-disabled-children-cambodia/>

Catherine L Geach  
(Founder)

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We thank Steve Porte for his beautiful photos of our school activities. All photos were made with the permission of our children and staff.

