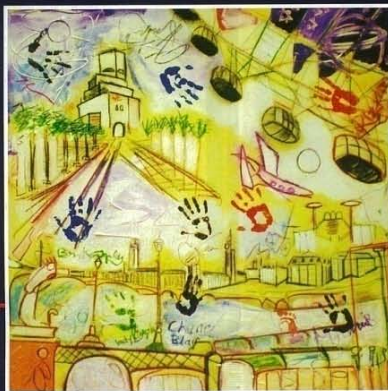




14<sup>th</sup> November 2009

## THE THIRD REACH OUT TO ASIA

### GALA DINNER ATTRACTS INTERNATIONAL STARS AND RAISES US\$15 MILLION



**D**oha really was a magnet for royals and celebrities last week as some of the biggest names in Gulf royalty joined Hollywood stars, British legends and famous faces from the world of art, music, business and film for the third Reach Out To Asia (ROTA) gala dinner hosted by HH the Emir Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani and HH Sheikha Mozah Bint Nasser Al-Missned.

Held at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, this annual high-profile charity gala dinner and auction raised a staggering US\$15million for the Reach Out To Asia charity. Founded by HH Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, the crown prince of Qatar and HE Sheikha Mayassa Bint Hamad Al-Thani in 2005, Reach Out To Asia is a very special charity supporting community development projects in Asia to promote the need for basic education.

As well as VIP Gulf royalty, the star-studded guest list included celebrities such as humanitarian Sir Bob Geldof, business mogul Sir Richard Branson, American singer Cher, Cherie Blair, Hollywood actor Josh Hartnett, Manchester United's Sir Alex Ferguson and artist Sacha Jafri.

One of the highlights of the auction was live painting by Sacha Jafri at the event itself. Guests watched Sacha transform a blank seven ft by seven ft canvas into another Sacha Jafri masterpiece, and the finished painting was bought for US\$1million by a member of the Qatar royal family. Sacha spoke exclusively to HELLO! about the painting, which features the

handprints of 10 of the VIP guests, and which he describes as an honour to have been asked to be part of: "I am really proud of the finished piece of work. It is a serious piece of art which has a really uplifting feel. I wanted the painting to reflect the hope of the children."

Along with celebrities including Riz Khan, Sir Bob Geldof, Jeff Koons and Cher, Miuuccia Prada was one of the famous handprints on the painting and she too shares in this passion for the children. Sacha told HELLO! "Miuuccia Prada is an amazing lady. She was the most interested in the painting and when I asked her where she wanted to place her handprint, she said 'with the children'."

As well as highlighting the essence of these children, the painting also represents the Museum of Islamic Art; Doha as a rising city for humanitarian and environmental issues; the first Galactic flight into space; and both the Al-Thani's and Sacha's affiliation with the UK. "I have real admiration for the Al-Thani family," explains Sacha, "I believe in ROTA and this wonderful family who give so much support to worthwhile causes, with ROTA being just one of them."

Other auction lots included a diamond necklace inspired by HH Sheikha Mozah featuring 1,288 diamonds, which sold for US\$2million and was the most expensive item. A bespoke edition Rolls Royce also sold for a cool US\$2.2million.

TEXT BY SOPHIE JONES-COOPER  
IMAGES BY CAROLINE TEO

Inset: The US\$1million painting by Sacha Jafri, 'Doha Rising'. Top right: Cher and Sir Bob Geldof both put their handprints on the painting. Centre: Other handprints included those from Daniela Lavender, Jeff Koons and Cherie Blair. Right: Sacha Jafri with Miuuccia Prada



REACH OUT TO ASIA