

Children Speak: Tsunami Releases 30-Sec Clip for INTERNATIONAL REMEMBRANCE of S.E. Asia 2004 Tsunami - 20th Anniversary

People gather at Tsunami Memorial in countries impacted. The Tsunami generated the "World's Largest Humanitarian Response in History" by over 58 countries.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, December 25, 2024 / EINPresswire.com/ -- This year marks the 20th anniversary of the 2004 Indian Ocean [tsunami](#) - one of the deadliest natural disasters in modern history, claiming approximately 230,000 lives across 14 countries. To honor those lost and spotlight the rarely seen, child-focused perspective of this catastrophe, Children Speak: Tsunami announces the release of a 30-second public service announcement (PSA) to be aired on December 26 during national newscasts.

Honoring Lives Lost, Encouraging Cultural Respect

Recognized at the George W. H. Bush '41 Presidential Library during the tsunami's first anniversary, Children Speak: Tsunami brings forward a perspective rooted in both empathy and cultural understanding. As the 20th anniversary approaches, the organization calls on international media outlets to broadcast this PSA,



Indonesian victim calls for help in multiple languages: Acehese, Islamic prayer language - Arabic, and English. Banda Aceh was multicultural.



Galle, Sri Lanka. Southbound Coastal Train #50 carrying over 1,500 paid passengers and an unknown number of unpaid passengers.

reminding the global community that disasters transcend boundaries—and so must our compassion.

Arlene Atherton a Cultural Anthropologist, during relief work collected drawings in February and March of 2005 in the three hardest hit countries: Indonesia, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. The countries vary in the size of the wave, and damage to villages or cities. Through the children's eyes, the viewer witnesses the onset of the wave to the shore, descending without warning. Drawings show sea-life left on the beach as the 1st wave receded. The immediacy of the Tsunami was fresh in the children's mind, depicting the

details of their trauma. These carefully rendered illustrations offer an intimate visual record of the event: trapped ships washed ashore, uprooted trees, people clinging to rooftops, and the frantic search for missing family members. The children witnessed people floating on top of cars washed down the street, the sight of victims bleeding, and the dead floating in the water. Their report demonstrates carefully drawn surroundings, with an aerial viewpoint out of reach of the Tsunami wave.

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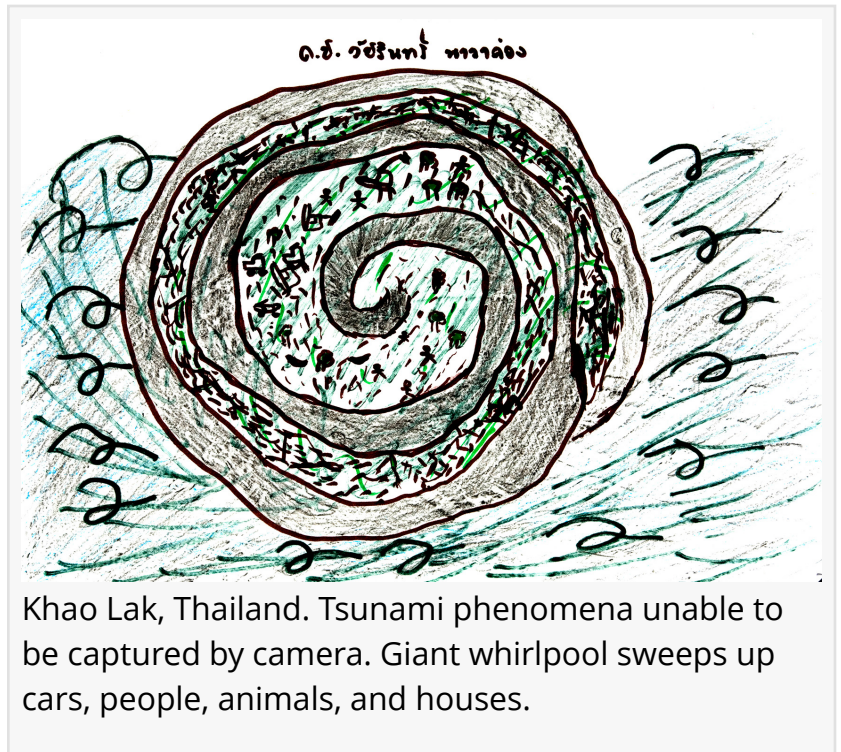
We remember this day when the WORLD CAME TOGETHER meeting the needs of a tremendous crisis. All differences of faith, viewpoint, & way of life set aside. We REMEMBER the tears, terror, panic, and fear."

Arlene R. Atherton

At 07:58:53 local time in Indonesia, a major earthquake with a magnitude of 9.2–9.3 struck, with an epicenter off the west coast of northern Sumatra, Indonesia. A massive tsunami with waves up to 100 feet (30 meters) devastated the communities along the surrounding coasts of the Indian Ocean. Approximately 230,000 people were killed, with 2,233 from overseas, in 14 countries.

The 30 sec MEDIA

Compared to traditional documentary footage, these



children's drawings offer an emotionally vivid and culturally nuanced record of events. The artwork provides insight into how families grieved, prayed, and came together in the wake of sudden tragedy. The drawings by the children survivors offer eyewitness reports. The children draw the trauma of the Tsunami wave: victims bleeding, people crying and shouting, and terror at the scale of the disaster. No camera could capture that or it would be certain death. Images from the Children Speak: Tsunami collection - www.childrenspeaktsunami.net

The drawings honor the dead, unidentified, and lost.

Access the 30-Second PSA

- Broadcast: 30 sec clip: CST-PSA_121724.mp4, <https://we.tl/t-Nv93UEfJSR> – Download Link via WeTransfer
- Still Images: Photographs of the original drawings, suitable for print or web: 6"x 4" Photos .jpeg <https://we.tl/t-2JUKgyGrQd>

Children Speak: Tsunami releases this 30 sec clip as a PSA to be run on the Anniversary date December 26th during commercial breaks on Newscasts.

Educational Resources and Collection Information

Beyond the PSA, the Children Speak: Tsunami collection offers the full 51-minute video and country specific footage of the AFTERMATH of the Tsunami capturing fragments of daily life shattered by the tsunami—from prayer books and dolls to entire neighborhoods washed away; Originally prepared for the George W. H. Bush Presidential Library. This expanded presentation juxtaposes the children's drawings with documentary photos of the devastation—fragments of houses, cars, mosques, prayer books, dolls, clothing, and personal belongings scattered by the tsunami's force. Atherton also documented mourning ceremonies adapted to each country's faith traditions, pay homage to the thousands still missing or unidentified. What was previously private passage for a family, was now a public ritual held en masse due to the large number of the dead. This footage acknowledges the profound emotional toll these communities continue to endure. (See www.childrenspeaktsunami.net)

20th Anniversary Memorial

Each year on December 26th Tsunami countries hold memorials. In Sri Lanka communities across the island hold religious ceremonies in Buddhist temples, Hindu kovils, mosques, and churches. A commemorative train ride each year passes the site where the tsunami overwhelmed a southbound train from Galle to Colombo, uniting the nation in grief and reflection. In Indonesia, survivors recall the 'call to prayer' sounding through neighborhoods reduced to rubble in Banda Aceh, where families continue to memorialize loved ones at the Tsunami Museum's glass wall bearing thousands of names. In Thailand's Khao Lak tourist area, 80% of the families lost a family member. Along the Andaman coast, including Khao Lak and Phuket, people light candles in the sand and offer food to Buddhist monks in traditional ceremonies blending quiet remembrance with hopes for renewed life and prosperity. Countries as far-reaching as Somalia, Tanzania, and Kenya also experienced the tsunami's force, with local memorials reflecting Islamic, Christian, and other indigenous customs. France, the home of UNESCO, offers a memorial: "Tsunami Remembrance and Resilience". Australia remembers their citizens lost, reciting their name by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Honorable Peggy Wong. Countries all over the world are holding OBSERVANCES of the disaster.

Children Speak: Tsunami is an educational organization created to allow the children who survived this tremendous disaster a voice. Their drawings signify the scope and scale of the Tsunami wave on their shores. Their accuracy in reporting the fine details of their trauma gives a reality to a child's testimony of current events. These drawings offer visual evidence of the USGS description of the formation, and descent of a tsunami wave. They offer a deeply human dimension that enriches historical records.

Arlene R. Atherton

Cultural Anthropologist, Art Historian. Photographer, Columbia University '01, Cultural Diplomacy '24. (Exhibited drawings & photography at [Asia](#) Society, NY; Asia Society, DC; and the George W. H. Bush Presidential Library.)

Arlene Atherton

Children Speak: Tsunami

+1 202-699-9045

aarleneratherton@gmail.com

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