

International Samaritan's Auction Shines a Light on Artists Who Have Relied on Garbage Dumps to Survive

Through education and opportunity, they're creating works of beauty and hope.

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A wide variety of exquisite art is available online in a silent auction. From baskets made of recycled Ethiopian newspaper to an intricate painting of a church in Central America, each piece was handmade by an International Samaritan scholarship student or their parent.

The art is part of International Samaritan's [Shine a Light: Artist Showcase and Auction](#). The silent auction is online now, until October 9, and ends with a live webinar that gives participants a chance to learn about some of the artists behind the pieces. The artists are growing up in settlements next to garbage dumps in cities in Central America and East Africa.



International Samaritan's Shine A Light: Artist Showcase & Auction kicked off with a showcase on October 1 at their headquarters in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

"These artists have incredible life stories, and it's a joy to see them be able to stay in school, use their talents, and forge a different future for their families," said Mike Tenbusch, president of International Samaritan.

Their artists and their families have survived by combing through the dumpsite to find recyclables to sell. It's a difficult life, Tenbusch explained, with daily existence in the dumpsite marked by physical and mental health challenges, limited access to clean water and proper

sanitation, pervasive stress, and barriers to education, adequate shelter, healthcare, and proper nutrition.

But a path out of poverty does exist. International Samaritan has local teams in seven countries. The team members regularly visit the dumpsites and nearby settlements, identifying children and young adults who want to continue their education.

“Scholarships are a game changer,” said Selam Terefe, International Samaritan’s Regional Director in East Africa. She regularly sees how scholarships give opportunities and change lives. When two teenage artists in Ethiopia became International Samaritan Scholars, “for the first time, they had access to resources that matched their curiosity and passion,” Terefe said. “Canvases, sketchbooks, paints, and professional guidance became integral parts of their lives. What had once been pencil sketches on the back of old exercise books now blossomed into vibrant art on canvas.”



All the art on display at International Samaritan's headquarters was made by scholarship students who once relied on garbage to survive. The artists donated their pieces for an auction to benefit scholarship support.

Both of those artists have artwork in the current auction. All the art available in the auction was donated by artists to raise money for International Samaritan's scholarship program. To see the artwork and bid on an auction item until October 9, visit: <https://internationalsamaritan.betterworld.org/auctions/international-samaritan-art>.

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*Mike Tenbusch, president of
International Samaritan*

International Samaritan currently supports 950 Samaritan Scholars in Central America, the Caribbean, and East Africa. To learn more, visit intsam.org.

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