



F.E.P.E. orphans' art featured in American Airlines' in-flight magazine April 2015



Drumsticks-as-art painted by orphans at the Foyer Espoir Pour les Enfants in Haiti

Aristide Phillips

Percussionists in famous bands are drumming up funds for schools in Haiti and children's arts programs in New Orleans by donating their signed drumsticks. Like a cymbal crash, the idea for Sticking Up For Children struck New Orleans music legend Cyril Neville, percussionist for the blues-rock band Royal Southern Brotherhood, and his bandmate Devon Allman while they were touring in 2013.

"My grandchildren painted the first drumsticks as I told them about the troubles of the orphanage and school in Haiti that would benefit," says Neville, the charity's co-founder. "They told me it made them feel good inside to help children who were less fortunate." Neville is a Grammy-winning percussionist, vocalist and songwriter who has performed with The Neville Brothers and recorded with Bob Dylan and Willie Nelson.

Drumsticks have been signed and donated by Mos Def, Dr. John and other acclaimed percussionists. Most are painted by schoolchildren in New Orleans and Port-au-Prince, Haiti. With 37 pairs of painted drumsticks sold at \$20 to \$1,000 per pair in the first 18 months, generating \$35,000 (including grant money) for student expenses and new classrooms in Haiti and kids' arts programs in New Orleans, it's safe to say the concept is a hit. —Bob Cooper

"Who can compete with those kids?"
Muldoon Elder, painter, gallery-owner in San Francisco and New York,
on drumsticks-as-art done by students in Haiti and New Orleans