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# Helping Hands at MY Place

By **Jennifer Miller**  
*Reporter*

B.C. musicians come together for tsunami relief

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It was more than 20 years ago that a group of 45 superstar musicians came together in Hollywood to record the mega-hit "We are the World" to raise money for victims of famine in Africa. That spirit of giving to others in need has been re-born in a group of prominent B.C. musicians who came together after the massive tsunami that hit Indonesia in December 2004 to record a song and release a CD to raise money for UNICEF.

In the first live performance of the Helping Hands CD, 13 artists will be performing at MY Millennium Place in Whistler Aug. 11 to raise money for the victims of the tsunami and the massive earthquake that hit the region more than two months ago.

The star-studded lineup includes rocker-turned-jazz diva Lee Aaron, blues man Jim Byrnes and folk queen Shari Ulrich. "The songs all have a common theme of hope and support," said Monique Creber, the producer and director of the concert, as well as one of the performers. Creber helped develop the idea of doing a song and CD to raise money for the tsunami victims. It was a way she could have a larger impact than just making a cash donation to one of the many charities that were contributing aid to Indonesia, she said.

"I really, really felt that I needed to do something."

Creber's husband, Michael Creber, wrote the CD's title track Helping Hands, which embodies the flavour and spirit of the infamous We are the World. The musician couple called on their wide range of musician friends and asked them to be a part of the CD, Monique said.

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Armoury recording studios in Vancouver donated the studio space, the artists all donated their time, and after a 20 hour recording session and song contributions from many of the featured artists, the CD was released February 2005.

Almost 100 per cent of the price of the CD goes to UNICEF because the costs to make it were so low, she said.

That spring, the Crebers tried to put together a live concert in Vancouver with all the artists, but with busy touring schedules they couldn't find a date when everyone was available, Monique said.

When the idea came up to have a benefit concert for Indonesia in Whistler on Aug. 11, most of the artists started signing on to the event.

"That particular date actually works out beautifully," she said.

"They're pretty much all booked or leaving town on the next day."

The concert is essentially a live version of the CD with a few additional group songs. There will be a children's choir and a band made up of award-winning musicians to accompany the wide range of musical styles that will be included in the show – including pop, jazz, blues, country, gospel and folk, Monique said.

"It's a really nice flow of a variety of music."

Children's entertainer Norman Foote said he was "thrilled" to be asked to participate in both the Helping Hands CD and concert.

He contributed a song called Fellow Man to the CD. The song has a message of peace and understanding, along with a rocking beat and good chorus.

"It's just a big reminder for us in many ways," Foote said of the event.

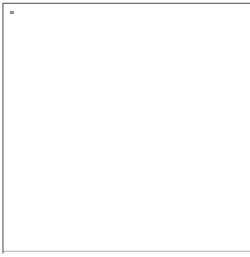
The concert gives people the opportunity to enjoy themselves at a concert but also give something back to the world, he said.

"I think there'll be a really good tone to the concert," he said.

"This is a great lineup."

The Helping Hands: West Coast Artists for UNICEF concert is Friday, Aug. 11 at MY Place. Tickets are \$50 and are available at the box office at (604) 935-8410, or online at [www.ticketmaster.ca](http://www.ticketmaster.ca).

The concert will be followed by a dinner with the artists at the Bearfoot Bistro. Visit [www.myplacewhistler.org](http://www.myplacewhistler.org) or [www.unicef.ca](http://www.unicef.ca) for more information.



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