

Art with a Heart

This Valentine's Day marks the 15th consecutive year of the "Art with a Heart" program that was first conceived of by Katherine Morgan, who was at that time an artists' representative here in South Florida. The idea was to use proceeds from exhibitions of her Fine Arts clients' works as a way to raise funds for deserving charities; the first to benefit from her effort was the South Florida Theater of the Deaf, the only organization that brings the deaf, hearing and hard-of-hearing together through entertainment that enables all to play an active role in community life, and to be recognized for their ability—not their deafness.



The "Art with a Heart" program has grown and changed through the intervening years. Today, having evolved into one of the nation's most highly regarded and in-demand Fine Art Photographers, Ms. Morgan herself has become the leading provider of such philanthropic funds. National awards and nationwide exhibitions featuring her photographic works at museums and galleries draw collectors of this art form, and a portion of the proceeds derived from their selections is set aside for donations to various charities—in many cases, to the charities named by the collectors, or purchasers, themselves.

A graduate of Carnegie-Mellon University, Ms. Morgan credits long-time friend, artist/designer James William III, for having helped to develop the successful formula for Art with a Heart, when, together, they formed the 52-piece retrospective that launched the program in 1995, in Ft. Lauderdale.

The charities that have benefited from this effort since then include both national organizations and such local services as the American Association of Caregiving Youth (through which pre- and early-teens devote their time to worthy community services) and Boca Respite Volunteers, comprised of adults whose work includes helping the elderly to maintain their independence with a higher quality of life.

Charitable organizations interested in benefiting from the "Art with a Heart" are invited to contact Ms. Morgan. In past years, the ways this program has been used include a raffle with the winner receiving a large signed print of a selected major print, or the production of a limited edition of signed posters of a selected photograph (usually between 500 and 1,000 in number), and the profits from sales of the posters, after actual cost, is then retained by the charity. Ms. Morgan has committed herself to cooperating with deserving organizations in coordinating specific programs. The suggested first step is for representatives of an organization to visit Ms. Morgan's website --- www.kmorganphotos.com --- decide on an appropriate photo from the many available, and then work together with her to design a poster and discuss the production arrangements.

"This is a special way of giving back to the community with heart, in a loving and compassionate way," notes Ms. Morgan, "especially at a time when difficult national economic times have had an effect on traditional fund-raising. People helping people. That's what it is all about."

