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ArtServe Highlights Importance of Art in Public Places with “Femme Empowered” Exhibition at Holy Cross Hospital

“Femme Empowered” presents the inspiring stories of emotional and physical strength through the work of acclaimed South Florida artists Nerissa Balland and Lori Pratico

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (May 29, 2019) – ArtServe and Holy Cross Hospital present the “Femme Empowered” art exhibition on display now through Wednesday, July 10 at the Dorothy Mangurian Comprehensive Women’s Center at Holy Cross HealthPlex. Through the work of acclaimed South Florida artists Nerissa Balland and Lori Pratico, “Femme Empowered” celebrates the courage, strength and inspiration derived from strong female role models in a one-of-a-kind mixed-media art exhibition.

In conjunction with its Art in Public Places initiative, which utilizes art as a tool for cultivating community wellness through creative activations and installations, ArtServe is kicking off the “Femme Empowered” exhibition with a free gallery reception on Wednesday, June 12 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Patricia R. Guerrieri Pavilion of the Women’s Center, located at 1000 N.E. 56th Street in Fort Lauderdale. All exhibited work is available for purchase with proceeds supporting the individual artists and larger cultural community.

“One of ArtServe’s foremost goals is to connect the public with the arts, which takes place both in and outside of the gallery,” said ArtServe Executive Director Craig W. Johnson. “Our Art in Public Places programs inspire intrigue and meaningful engagement in the day-to-day life of the community. The effect is especially profound at Holy Cross, where we have seen time and time again the impact of our art installations on the welfare of patients and caregivers alike.”

According to research from Americans for the Arts, the leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts and arts education in America, the arts enhance coping, thereby reducing patients’ need for hospital care, pain medication and unnecessary extra costs. In addition, the arts reduce patients’ level of depression and situational anxiety, contribute to patient satisfaction and improve the medical providers’ recruitment and retention rates. As such, creative arts in healthcare interventions have the potential to address concerns on healthcare spending and the quality of medical care that are currently facing our nation.

“We’re at a crossroads. Continuing to organize and produce these exhibitions is not possible without support from the community that benefits from them,” Johnson added. “Without public
or corporate backing, we will only be able to serve the patients of Holy Cross Hospital with one more exhibition before we must discontinue this important work."

With the goal of continuing its Art in Public Places initiatives, furthering its artistic reach throughout South Florida and expanding programs for underserved and marginalized populations, ArtServe is seeking new partners and sponsors. ArtServe is eager to collaborate with individuals and organizations interested in supporting the arts and providing equitable access to the arts, which enables communities to reach their highest potential across social, cultural and economic arenas. To support ArtServe as a program partner or a sponsor, contact Craig W. Johnson at 954-462-8190 ext. 204 or at CraigWJ@artserve.org.

In addition to Holy Cross Hospital, ArtServe maintains strategic partnerships with community leaders and organizations that support the arts within the community. ArtServe’s Art in Public Places initiative includes the PRISM W Fort Lauderdale Collection presented by the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce and PositivityAry’s Pop of Color presented by the Westfield Broward Mall. Additionally, the ArtServe building is home to the JM Family Gallery, Rosemary Duffy Larson Auditorium, BDO Gallery and the BankUnited Gallery. Other partners include the Broward County Cultural Division, Walmart, Culture Builds Florida, WLRN, Great Locations, South Florida Gay News, Funding Arts Broward, McKinley Insurance Services, Memorial Healthcare System, PNC, LBU Lighting, Puppet Network, Shelly Bradshaw and Jim Hammond.

"Femme Empowered" runs concurrently with ArtServe’s "Reflect: Healing Though Art" exhibition, presented by Holy Cross Hospital and on display at ArtServe until June 7. "Reflect" includes a panel discussion on Wednesday, June 5 from 6 to 8 p.m. ArtServe is located at 1350 East Sunrise Boulevard in Fort Lauderdale. For more information, visit artserve.org.

CALENDAR BRIEF: “Femme Empowered" Gallery Reception on Wednesday, June 12
ArtServe and Holy Cross Hospital’s "Femme Empowered” art exhibition kicks off with a free gallery reception on Wednesday, June 12 from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. in the Patricia R. Guerrieri Pavilion of the Dorothy Mangurian Comprehensive Women’s Center, located at 1000 N.E. 56th Street in Fort Lauderdale. Through the work of acclaimed South Florida artists Nerissa Balland and Lori Pratico, “Femme Empowered” celebrates the courage, strength and inspiration derived from strong female role models in one-of-a-kind mixed-media art exhibition. For more information, visit artserve.org/holy-cross-hospital.

CALENDAR BRIEF: “Reflect: Healing Though Art” Panel Discussion on Wednesday, June 5 at 6 p.m.
Join ArtServe and Holy Cross Hospital for a deep dive into the power of art as healing therapy with a panel of local experts who have extensive and sometimes personal experience with using art as a recuperative instrument. Moderated by artist and human rights advocate Vicki Rosenthal, the panel will share their stories, offer insights about art as a cultivator of wellness and discuss the impact of their work. Panelists include The Renfrew Center Art Therapist Kelsey Brannock, Florida Children’s Theatre Executive Director Janet Erlick, renowned sculpture artist George Gadson, ArtServe Executive Director and former Center for Contemporary Dance Executive Director Craig W. Johnson, stand-up comic and substance
abuse counselor Michael Panzeca, and former Miami City Ballet dancer and stroke survivor turned painter Isanusi Garcia Rodriguez. The panel is free and open to the public. Following the discussion, there will be a Q&A with the panel and an opportunity for attendees to share their experiences. For more information and to register to attend, visit artserve.org/schedule/reflect_panel/.

About ArtServe, Inc.
A 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization born out of a missive established by the Broward Cultural Division in 1988, ArtServe, Inc. became one of six of the nation's first arts incubators. Designed to provide emerging and seasoned artists the space, education and resources to create new work, build audiences and cultivate self-sustaining business models, ArtServe supports 2,300 artists each year. Also providing professional-development, marketing and technology support for Broward County cultural organizations, the organization is directly responsible for amplifying the County's cultural vibrancy and strengthening the local economy through the arts. With direct service to the community, ArtServe offers public performances, workshops, community classes in the arts, gallery exhibits and customized, immersive arts experiences for corporations and communities alike. In 2019, the organization is redoubling its commitment to diversity and inclusion, and increasing its focus on the presentation of creative works by artists that promote global wellness, social change and advocacy for special populations. ArtServe is supported in part by the Broward County Board of County Commissioners as recommended by the Broward Cultural Council, the State of Florida, the Department of State and the Division of Cultural Affairs. Entry to the organization's ongoing public exhibits is free, and all are welcome. To learn more about upcoming events, please visit www.artserve.org or call (954) 462-8190.

About Holy Cross Hospital
A member of Trinity Health, Fort Lauderdale-based Holy Cross Hospital is a full-service, non-profit, Catholic, teaching hospital operating in the spirit of the Sisters of Mercy. Holy Cross Hospital has been named one of the top three hospitals of 64 in the Miami metro area and one of the top 10 in the state in U.S. News and World Report's 2017-2018 Best Hospital rankings. Through strategic collaborations and a commitment to being a person-centered, transforming, healing presence, the 557-bed hospital offers progressive inpatient, outpatient and community outreach services and clinical research trials to serve as our community’s trusted health partner for life. To learn more about Holy Cross Hospital, visit holy-cross.com. Connect @holycrossfl.

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