

# The Wings of an Angel



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## Artist Anne Neilson's work takes flight, but she remains fully rooted in the Charlotte community

Anne Neilson paints angels, but people who know her say her paintings may as well be self-portraits.

Neilson, who lives in Charlotte, has earned a national reputation for her ethereal style and message of hope. While her work is in some prominent private collections (Oprah owns one!), she doesn't paint for the acclaim. She paints so she can give back.

Angels are more than her subject matter; they are a visual representation of her faith.

Neilson's God-given talent has a higher purpose. The wife and mother of four has donated more than \$100,000 to charitable causes since 2007 ... all from her art sales. Even before she opened her eponymous art gallery in South End in May, she regularly

hosted art shows for charities and donated up to fifty percent of the profits to that night's designated beneficiary.

In September, Anne and her gallery will pay tribute to Jacqueline B. Holmes, a Jacksonville, Florida art advisor and collector who is selling works from her contemporary collection.

"Jacqueline: Art Advisor and Collector – 50 Years of Contemporary Art" will present some of the finest works from Holmes' collections. Works by Al Held, Frank Stella, Louise Nevelson, Robert Swain and Frank Faulkner will be on view. The show, which opens with a cocktail reception on September 4th, will also feature works from lesser-known artists

that many first-time art buyers may find affordable.

Neilson's reputation is attracting artists and authors of national prominence to Charlotte. She represents artist Eve Plumb, best known as "Jan" from *The Brady Bunch*. Plumb will have her own one-woman show at the gallery on November 7th. Also in November the gallery will host a book signing with Sister Schubert – of rolls and biscuit fame.

Patrons can count on a philanthropic component to nearly every event Neilson hosts. Strokes of Compassion, which she founded in 2011, is the umbrella organization for her art shows. At each of these shows, she donates up to half of her profits to a chosen nonprofit.



Sales of Neilson's angel art have benefitted organizations that help the homeless, domestic violence survivors and disadvantaged children. The "Levine Cardiac Kids," children with heart defects, attended a special camp just for them, thanks in part to Neilson's donation.

Because of the philanthropic nature of her artistic ventures, Neilson refers to her new gallery, Anne Neilson Fine Art, as a "lighthouse." But she isn't merely exhibiting her own work; she's showing other fine artists from the United States, Canada and Europe, too. A portion of the proceeds from all sales in the gallery benefits a different nonprofit organization each month. In July, for instance, the beneficiary was 24 Hours of Booty, a cycling event that raises money to fight cancer.

Neilson's soothing palette and angelic subject matter have made her a favorite among A-list collectors. Kathie Lee Gifford featured Neilson on

*The Today Show* and used one of Neilson's designs, "A Joyful Noise Unto the Lord," for her personal holiday card last year. That commission sparked the line of note cards Neilson recently launched.

In addition to being an artist and philanthropist, Neilson authored *Angels In Our Midst*, a book that contains her angel images as well as the inspirational and personal stories that inspired them. Since the book's publication in 2012, it has sold more than 15,000 copies. Her second book, *Strokes of Compassion*, will be published this fall.

Neilson's halo and wings may not be visible. But she is as angelic as the heavenly images she paints. \*

*Anne Neilson Fine Art is located at 118 E. Kingston Ave. in South End. The gallery is open Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and on Saturdays by appointment. For more information, visit [anneneilsonfineart.com](http://anneneilsonfineart.com) or call 980-253-9566.*

