



With their unwavering dedication to art and philanthropy, Lori and Kirk Franke are making Fort Lauderdale a richer place to live, one masterpiece at a time.

# ART, HEART & PHILANTHROPY

Lori and Kirk Franke use their passion for art to enrich the community, nurture artists, and support the NSU Fort Lauderdale Art Museum.

BY **JENNY STARR PEREZ** PHOTOGRAPHY **FELIPE CUEVAS**

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rt speaks to us in a way that nothing else does,” says Lori Franke, capturing the essence of her and her husband Kirk’s lifelong passion. As influential figures in South Florida’s art scene, the Fort Lauderdale natives have dedicated their lives to collecting contemporary art, supporting local artists, and enriching their community through philanthropic work. For the Frankes, art is not just a personal pursuit but a powerful tool for change, inspiring others to discover the beauty and potential within their surroundings.

The Frankes’ journey as art collectors began years ago when they first discovered a shared love for contemporary pieces. “It’s a dialogue, a connection that transcends time and space,” Lori says, reflecting on the couple’s expansive collection.

Their love for art naturally extended to a broader commitment to the art community, particularly through their involvement with the NSU Art Museum in Fort Lauderdale. Kirk fondly recalls their early days with the museum, “We started with Cobra Circle, an invitation-only group that connects young leaders with the museum. It was our first step into a larger world of art and philanthropy.”

Lori’s influence at the museum grew as she took on roles such as co-chair of Cobra Circle and later expanded her involvement to Curator Circle, an exclusive group of collectors and supporters. Her passion for nurturing art and education led her to join Beaux Arts, a Fort Lauderdale charity founded by the Junior League, with a mission to promote art education and support the NSU Art Museum. Lori’s dedication saw her rise to the position of President, where she spearheaded various initiatives, including the “Museum on the Move” program.

“Beaux Arts is not just about art for art’s sake,” Lori explains. “It’s about using art to inspire and uplift. We believe that every child has the potential to excel, and sometimes all it takes is a field trip to an art museum to ignite that spark.”

The “Museum on the Move” program, which provides free field trips for Broward County Public School students to visit the NSU Art Museum, is one of Lori’s proudest achievements. “I remember a little boy in my son’s class who had a rough home life. When we showed him a Picasso painting, he was the only one who saw it as a mirror. That moment showed me the transformative power of art,” she recalls.

Kirk shares Lori’s enthusiasm for giving back to the community. “Art has given us so much, and it’s only right that we give back. Supporting the NSU Art Museum and local artists is our way of ensuring that others can experience the same joy and inspiration that we do,” he says.

Beyond the museum, the Frankes are also deeply involved in other philanthropic efforts. Lori, who juggles a demanding career as a Regional Account Executive with AbbVie and her role as a mother of two teenage boys, finds time to volunteer for various causes. She is particularly passionate about helping underprivileged students at Sunrise Middle School, where she serves on the PTSA board. “When I found out there were 50 homeless students at Sunrise, I was heartbroken. We started a Falcon Closet to provide them with essentials, and it’s something that I’m deeply committed to,” she says.

Lori and Kirk’s commitment to their community is a testament to their belief that art and philanthropy are intertwined. “Art is about connection,” Lori says. “Whether it’s connecting with a piece of art or connecting with a child who sees something in it, it’s all about building relationships and making a difference.”

As they continue to expand their collection and support the NSU Art Museum, the Frankes remain dedicated to their mission of fostering a vibrant and inclusive art community in South Florida. “We’ve been incredibly fortunate,” Kirk concludes. “Now, we want to ensure that others have the same opportunities to experience the power of art.”



Lori and Kirk Franke’s curated collection reflects their passion for contemporary art and their love for Fort Lauderdale’s vibrant arts community.