Friends of Symphony Orchestra Augusta  
*Awards – Wed, Jun 7  3:45 pm    #1*  
Silent Art Auction for Scholarships  
Presenter:  Sue Alexanderson

**CLICK TO BEGIN**

Slide 1  OPENING

Silent Art Auction for Scholarship Fund

A fund-raising project for Collage: Creative Arts Camp sponsored by Friends of Symphony Orchestra Augusta in Augusta, Georgia for ten years

**CLICK TO ADVANCE**

Slide 2  SYMPHONY CAMP

Collage: Creative Arts Camp, “Symphony Camp,” is a three-week summer day camp for students entering kindergarten through entering fifth grade. The children jump in with both feet to have “hands-on” experiences with orchestral instruments, drawing, chorus, drama, movement, weaving, puppetry, storytelling, and creative writing.

**CLICK**  Forty to forty-five children from surrounding counties attend each week. They reflect the ethnicities and economic backgrounds of our population. Tuition is $125 per week and is used to pay the teachers $20 per hour. The Director and Co-director as well as the 12 to 15 middle, high school, college, and adult assistants are volunteers.

**CLICK TO ADVANCE**

Slide 3  SCHOLARSHIP OVERVIEW

In the 35 years of camp, we have included every child who has wanted to attend, even when the family has not been able to afford the tuition. The idea of a “Silent Art Auction” came about to raise money to cover the cost for economically challenged children.
Our members know families who have limited financial resources and an interest in enriching their children’s lives. Also, parents who call to get more camp details often mention a financial need. We offer whatever scholarship amount is necessary to fit into their budgets. In any given week, between 1/3 and 1/2 of the youngsters use partial or full scholarships.

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Slide 4 TIMELINE

Throughout the calendar year, we ask local artists to donate a piece of their artwork to benefit the children.

We begin the auction with the pieces which have been contributed prior to the opening concert. We confirm as many as possible in the spring and summer. We add pieces that come in during the fall and save later donations for the following season. The auction closes with the Friends’ annual dinner in May.

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Slide 5 ARTWORK

Over the years, art contributions have included original oil, acrylic, and watercolor paintings, Giclee’ prints, oil pastels, hand-thrown pottery, photographs, hand-woven bracelets using the Japanese kumihimo braiding technique, hand-woven baskets and wall hangings, and turned-wood items.

CLICK (for picture) Downtown Augusta has an “Artists’ Row” of shops presenting the work of various artists. Our members know many of the shop owners and artists and request donations. In fact, a few artists offer artwork every year. In addition, students and teachers at Augusta University’s Ceramics Department have given us quite a few pottery pieces.

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Slide 6 NETWORKING

At every concert, a volunteer at the art display explains its purpose to benefit children.

People want to be supportive and they spread the word to friends who are, or who know, professional or amateur artists.
They also donate pieces from their personal collections. For example, a local newspaper photographer, who was taking casual “Spotted” photos at a concert, offered to contribute one of his pieces.

We note artists’ names mentioned in the newspaper column “The Artside.” We see which artists donate to the “Artists Undercover” annual fundraiser. We talk with artists who set up booths at the weekly “Saturday Market at the River” and at the annual “Arts in the Heart of Augusta.”

As a thank you, we invite the contributing artists and a “plus one” to attend our annual dinner as our guests.

We also invite people who have placed bids throughout the season, so they can increase their bids before the auction closes at the end of dinner. We hope a polite bidding war ensues.

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Slide 7 “SCROLL Study” PRINTS

A few years ago, a gifted Augusta artist, Lillie Morris, donated a limited edition of 50 hand-embellished, signed, and numbered prints of her mixed-media painting “Scroll Study.” We have sold several each season for $50 unframed and $100 framed. Our art shop partner frames the prints at her cost of $50. We have five prints left to sell.

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Slide 8 MARKETING

We place an ad in the season’s program book and show a PowerPoint slide prior to each Symphony Series Concert. “Tent” cards are placed on Pops! tables and there is a line item for a monetary scholarship contribution on our membership form.

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Slide 9 CHALLENGE
The major challenge for this project is the safe transportation, set up, take down, and storage of the artwork between the season’s events.

Modified quilted pillow shams were made by two volunteers to protect the pieces.

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Slide 10   VOLUNTEERS

Our membership comprises a “committee of the whole” to connect with artists to request and gather artwork. Then, a core group of 5 to 7 members is in charge of the season’s logistics, including the transportation, set up, take down, and loading of the art at each event. Core members alternate explaining the project to patrons and placing the “tent cards” on POPS! tables.

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Slide 11   SET UP

The art is displayed at each of the 6 Symphony Series and 4 POPS! Concerts and at our annual luncheon and dinner. There are four different venues, and we have found that the ideal number of art pieces we can effectively display each season is between 15 and 20.

CLICK TOADVANCE

Slide 12   GOALS

We want to raise at least $1,000 each season, and have averaged that over the past five years. We want children of all economic levels to be able to attend camp.

CLICK TO ADVANCE

Slide 13   SUCCESS

Last season, we raised $1,510. The silent auction brought in $1,360 and the sale of three “Scroll Study” prints made $150. During the three weeks of last summer’s 35th Symphony Camp, 54 of the 120 campers participated in our scholarship program (45%).
The lives of several thousand children in the greater Augusta area have been enriched through Collage: Creative Arts Camp, and the scholarships have broadened our scope. Friendships have formed among campers of different ethnic and economic backgrounds. Youngsters have developed a love for a variety of artistic activities and their joy has been contagious. Some have become musicians, music teachers, dancers, artists, singers, actors, and Symphony staff members.

Here is an example of how this opportunity can impact a life and the community. Earl began as a scholarship camper when 8-years-old. He had very few financial resources. One day at camp, he sat down at a piano for the first time and discovered that he could play by ear. He continued to participate in camp and return to inspire children into his early college years.

Earl has completed his specialized studies in Categorical Internal Medicine at Brown University and has produced 3 piano CDs. Dr. Earl Stewart, Jr., now 30, is practicing General Internal Medicine in Thomaston, Georgia with a focus on people who have financial challenges. He has begun contributing to the camp scholarship fund, helping to provide enriching opportunities for Augusta children in “low income” (his term) families. We like to think the camp scholarships and experiences played a part in Earl’s life as they have in the lives of so many others.