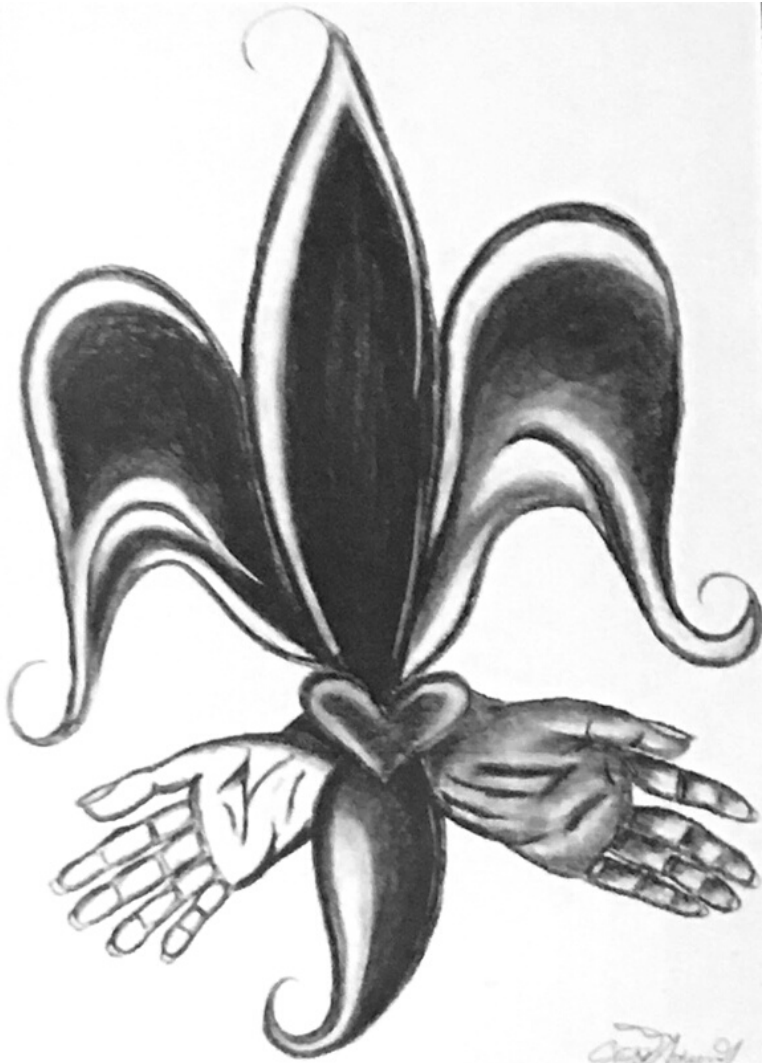


CRISTY  CALI

Lend a Loving Hand
New Orleans



Cristy Cali

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Lend a Loving Hand New Orleans

In case you have not heard the story of what inspired me to become a jewelry designer, you hold in your hand **THE** reason my life changed.

During the Spring of 2006, as a sophomore at Ursuline Academy High School, my art teacher asked our class to create a piece of artwork that reflected and expressed our inner-most feelings about Hurricane Katrina and the rebuilding process. The immediate aftermath was filled with heart-wrenching stories of separation and despair, but also extreme acts of bravery, kindness and courage. Most importantly, Katrina brought New Orleans together even closer as a community. We became a more unified voice and collective of empowered individuals. My depiction of black & white hands united in love, with a mission to quite literally lend a helping hand to your fellow neighbor, was what I felt in my heart and expressed through this charcoal medium at age 15.

A few months after I had submitted my art project, I walked into my family's French Quarter jewelry store to get to work when I noticed a piece of jewelry on the front table that stopped me dead in my tracks. Upon closer inspection, I realized this necklace was a physical reality of something that was once in my imagination. My artwork had been converted into jewelry! My mother had sent my drawing to a jewelry caster, without my knowledge, to make my piece a wearable piece of art. She came up behind me and said, "Do you like it?" with a loving smile. My eyes filled with tears and my entire body was pulsating with a new emotion I had never felt before. That same day, I sold several pieces of my artwork-turned-jewelry and for the first time in my life felt a sense of **purpose**. The rest is history.

For the first time since I was in high school, I reproduced this design in two different sizes, under my new married designer name. Because this design is so significant in my life, I decided to make this reproduction *extremely exclusive* for those that I know in my heart would appreciate this work the most. The large version is reserved strictly for Flagship Store VIP members, not available for purchase. The small version will be sold exclusively at my Magazine Street store and capped at 300 units with the year "2019" engraved on the back to commemorate the year I opened my shop – 13 years after I [unknowingly] designed this very first piece of jewelry.