



HELP-PORTRAIT

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PHOTOGRAPHERS WORLDWIDE GIVE BACK ON 12.12.09
HELP-PORTRAIT BUILDS INTO AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT

NASHVILLE, TN...November 17, 2009...On December 12th, photographers worldwide will unite using their time, skills, and equipment to give back to their community through the debut event, **Help-Portrait**. This is a movement of both professional and amateur photographers from all backgrounds hoping to make a difference this holiday season.

The goal of **Help-Portrait** is simple: 1. Find someone in need 2. Take their portrait 3. Print their portrait and 4. Deliver their portrait. With less than 25 days until **Help-Portrait**, over 4100 people in 470-plus locations in more than 55 countries have already registered and formed groups with the numbers growing daily.

Help-Portrait was formed by celebrity photographer Jeremy Cowart as he contemplated using his skills and expertise to give back to those who may not have the opportunity for a professional photo. The idea is that a photographer has the unique ability to help someone smile, laugh and return their dignity- it is a movement, a shift in photography. This movement began only 2 months ago with the launch of the YouTube video from Cowart. Since then, **Help-Portrait** has spread across the world as photographers have jumped on board to give back.

“December 12th is about helping people who never imagined having their portrait made,” shares Cowart on his idea. “Kids who don’t have their own families, those in need at children’s hospitals here and abroad, single moms, the elderly, the homeless or even your own neighbor. This is about giving pictures, not taking them. It’s about building relationships in your own community and giving hope.”

Striving to equip and mobilize **Help-Portrait** participants and organizers in each community, Cowart and team have launched Help-Portrait.com with a social media “community” page. Since the launch of the site, more than 88,000 unique visitors from 158 countries have visited help-portrait.com; over 4300 follow @help_portrait on Twitter; and 5600-plus fans gather on Facebook, indicating a huge impact on December 12th.

Last month, Cowart and a team of 15 local photographers conducted a “dry-run” event in Nashville with the help of the Nashville Rescue Mission, a local homeless shelter. In one day, more than 80 homeless men, women and children had their portraits taken, some of whom had never been photographed before. The impact of the day solidified the reason for not just taking pictures, but giving them.

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“You have no idea what was done for these people,” said Lee Ann Dichtel, Special Events Coordinator for the Nashville Rescue Mission. “Most of the time, when people see them walking on the road, they turn around and go the other direction. So to give them the opportunity to look them in the face and show them how beautiful they are, means a lot.”

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About Jeremy Cowart:

Cowart began full-time photography in 2005 and has traveled to 6 continents with his talent. He’s photographed Imogen Heap, Sting, Taylor Swift, Britney Spears, Carrie Underwood and more. He’s also worked with entertainment clients ABC, E!, Fox, A&E, FX, The Style Network, CMT and more. You can view his photos and learn more at: <http://www.jeremycowart.com/> or read his blog: <http://blog.jeremycowart.com/> and follow him on Twitter @jeremycowart .

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