

ESSENCE

ARTWALK

A GUIDE TO WORKS BY BLACK AND BROWN ARTISTS
NEW ORLEANS SUMMER 2022



WELCOME

You have in your hands, The Essence Art Walk — A guide to Black & Brown Art Works currently on view in New Orleans. Whether you're a NOLA local keen to see more of the city or a visiting tourist, walking tours are a great way to learn interesting and often hidden histories. New Orleans, with its abundance of cultural wealth, offers a diverse experience to every visitor, with its roots in the African diaspora and the Caribbean, a unique heritage in the United States. Indeed, walking around you will see many monuments and markers to a storied past, many of which were erected over a century ago.

Cultural Affairs depts, organizers & managers of public space inherit these fixtures built into the environment that pay homage to their forebears. We acknowledge that these symbols are connected to systems of power and public memory and that as a nation we are coming to terms with the fact that many of the stories as told by our current monuments misrepresent our history.

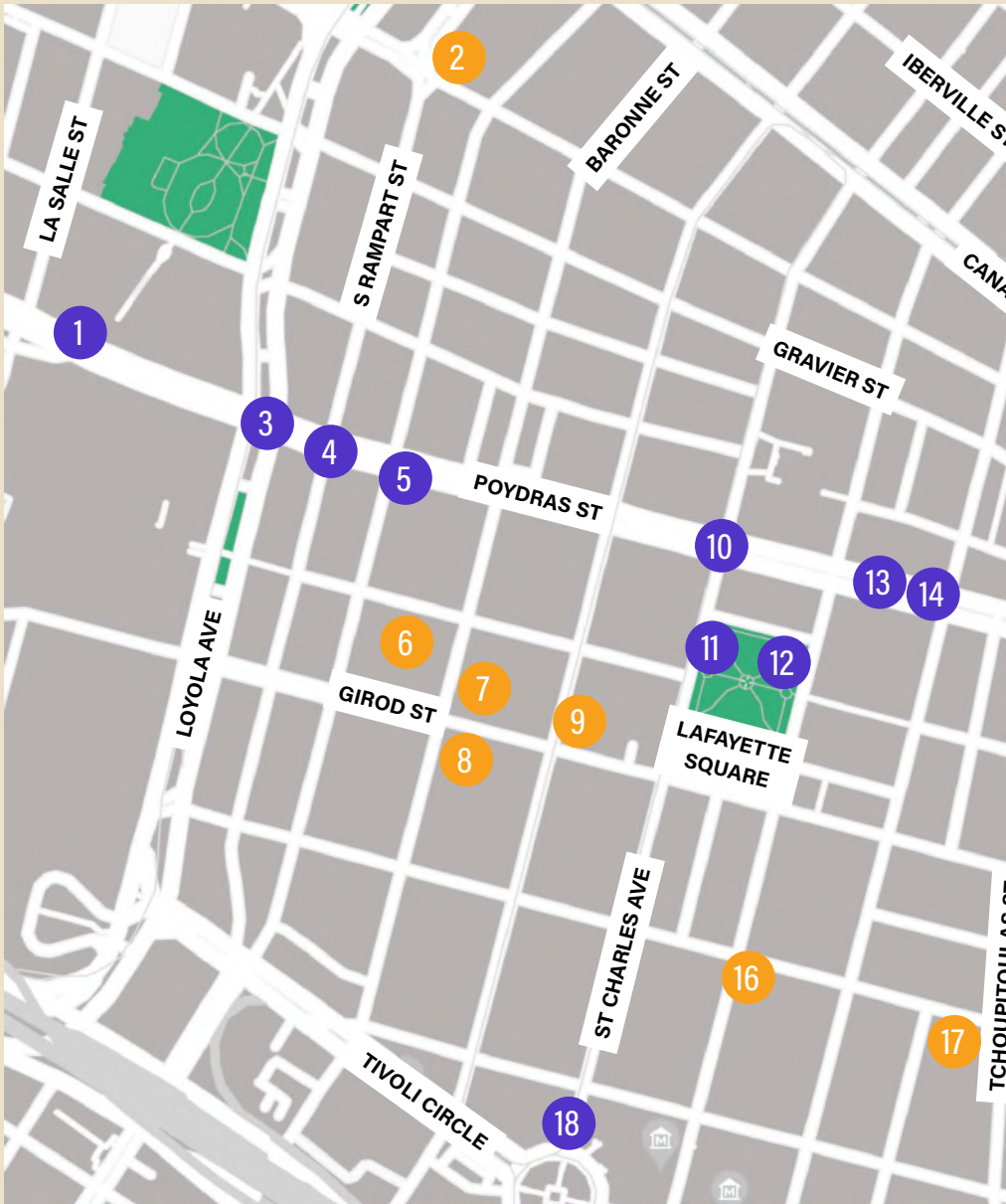
A recently released study authored by The Monument Lab examined about 50,000 conventional U.S. monuments to determine the demographics of “the nation’s commemorative landscape.” The report found that of the 50 individuals represented most frequently by monuments in this country, the landscape is overwhelmingly white and male: 88 percent are white men, and half were slave owners. Only 6 percent of statues represent women, and 10 percent honor Black or Indigenous figures. Another key finding of this report was that the most common features of American monuments reflect war and conquest. Surely we can be more representative.

The Office of Cultural Economy and the Arts Council envision a New Orleans in which arts and culture play a pivotal role in all areas of policy, planning, and placemaking; building on the abundant cultural wealth and creativity of our community. This Art guide invites you to consider under-told stories of Black heroes and activism and themes that include the rich history, cultural practices, and spirituality of Black New Orleans; civil rights history and contemporary struggles for racial justice; Black joy, healing, strength, and wellbeing.

On this tour you'll see sculpture, murals and street art by Black & Brown artists, art that recognizes Black people's contributions and experiences. With this guide we hope to have highlighted examples of how American public art can memorialize, inspire, and foster equitable commemorative landscapes.



ESSENCE ARTWALK LOCATIONS



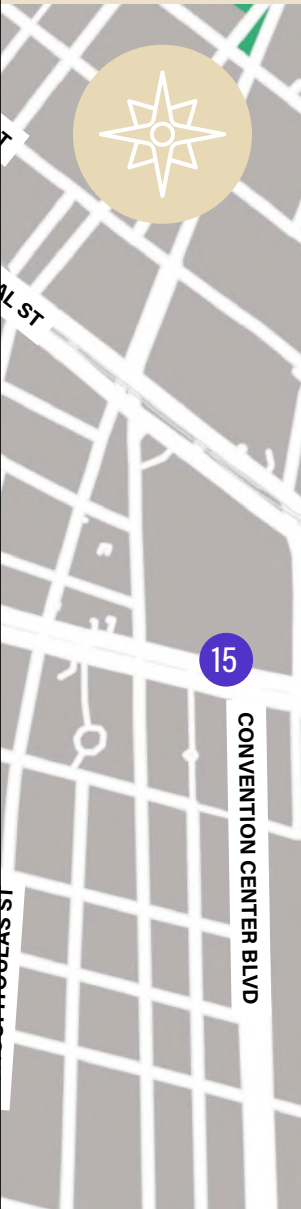
LEGEND



SCULPTURE



MURAL



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Artist: Kennedy Yanko

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Artist: Axel Void, Reginald O'Neal

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Title: You Are What You Eat
Artist: Jessica Strahan (local artist)

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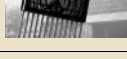
Title: The Crown Act Mural
Artist: Journey Allen

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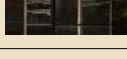
Title: Gymnast
Artist: Enrique Alférez (local artist)

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Title: All Power to All People
Artist: Hank Willis Thomas

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Title: Kalief Browder: The Box
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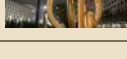
Title: Buoyancy: Love in Joy
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Title: Sentinel (Mami Wata)
Artist: Simone Leigh



Artwork Title: Three Ways
Artist Name: Kennedy Yanko
Location: Poydras Street at Lasalle Street
Date Created/Installed: 2019; 2019

Commissioning Agency/s:
Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(on loan from artist)
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Fabricated from stainless steel, bronze, urethane and enamel, New York based Yanko's piece is comprised of materials that vibrate with both harmony and discord and, as her first public commission, features her signature "paint skins" technique.



Artwork Title: Zero Hunger
Artist Name: Axel Void, Reginald O'Neal
Location: 129 Roosevelt Way
Date Created/Installed: 2021

Commissioning Agency/s:
Gift to the City of New Orleans; curated
by Street Art for Mankind (SAM)
Photo Credit: streetartmankind.org

It's the first of six murals that will be painted in the cities of Oakland, CA, Houston Tx, Washington DC, Detroit and Battle Creek Michigan, as part of an awareness campaign called "Zero Hunger," created by World Food Program USA, Street Art for Mankind and Kellogg Company. The murals are being organized by Street Art for Mankind, a New York-based organization that was created to raise awareness about child labor issues around the globe. This campaign is focusing on Black communities in the U.S. in particular. According to the U.S.D.A., African-Americans suffer food insecurity at more than twice the rate of non-Hispanic white Americans.



Artwork Title: Dancing in Nigeria

Artist Name: Melvin Edwards

Location: Poydras Street at Loyola Avenue

Date Created/Installed: 1974 – 1978; 2020

Commissioning Agency/s:

Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition (on loan from Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art)

Photo Credit: Crista Rock

The concept for *Dancing in Nigeria* developed after Melvin Edwards took his first trip to Ede, Nigeria, in 1970. He was inspired by much of what he saw, including the culture, architecture, dance, and West African music. The artist based this sculpture on drawings and diagrams he created that follow dancer's movements. Although its form celebrates movement, the sculpture is static – solidifying the fleeting nature of dance. Best known for steel sculptures devoid of color, Edwards chose the bright yellow of *Dancing in Nigeria* during a period of experimentation in his career.



Artwork Title: Untitled Estructura (Red)

Artist Name: Carmen Herrera

Location: Poydras Street at Loyola Avenue

Date Created/Installed: 1962/2020

Commissioning Agency/s:

Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(part of The Helis Foundation Collection),
courtesy of Lisson Gallery NY

Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Core to Cuban American artist Carmen Herrera's work is a drive for formal simplicity and a striking sense of color. Herrera began the sketches and preparations for her Estructuras (Structures) in the late 1960s, around the same time that key Minimalism sculptors including Carl Andre, Donald Judd and Barnett Newman were early in their exploration of the medium. Of the shift from painting to sculpture Herrera noted: "It became clear to me that the linear elements in my work required a hard surface to integrate structurally the "hard edges." These works marked an important moment in Herrera's career, wherein the forms move from drawing, to painting, to sculpture, and her meticulous sharp edges are physically manifested. Carmen Herrera recently died at the age of 106, and her work is on view in museum collections across the world, including the Museum of Modern Art, the Whitney Museum of American Art, and the Smithsonian Museum.



Artwork Title: Black Butterfly
Artist Name: John T. Scott (local artist)
Location: Poydras Street at O'Keefe Avenue
Date Created/Installed: 1996; 2018

Commissioning Agency/s:
Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(part of The Helis Foundation Collection)
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Black Butterfly is an abstract aluminum sculpture completed four years after Xavier University professor, John T. Scott, was awarded the MacArthur Genius Award. Scott's work frequently displays themes related to African American life, particularly the rich Afro-Caribbean culture and musical heritage of New Orleans. Visit the Ogden Museum of Southern Art at 925 Camp Street to see more examples of John Scott's sculptures.



Artwork Title: Lessons
Artist Name: Ayo Scott (local artist)
Location: 620 O'Keefe Street
Date: 2021

Collection: Unframed presented by The Helis Foundation, a project of Arts New Orleans
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

This mural is an ode to generations of New Orleanians, with depictions of his father's well-known public sculptures Spirit House and Ocean Song, and his young daughter dressed as Wonder Woman holding a daisy as a tribute to his mother.



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Artwork Title: Survive

Artist Name: Brandon "BMike" Odums + Arts
New Orleans' Young Artist Movement (YAM).
(local artist)

Location: Louisiana Capital Assistance
Center – 636 Baronne Street

Date: 2019

Collection: Unframed presented by The Helis
Foundation, a project of Arts New Orleans

Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Brandon B-Mike Odums, New Orleans muralist and founder of Studio Be collaborates with Arts New Orleans' Young Artist Movement, the first city-wide youth mural initiative, engaging youth, artists, and communities in sustained public art and place-making.



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Artwork Title: You Are What You Eat

Artist Name: Jessica Strahan (local artist)

Location: Legacy Park – 730 Baronne Street

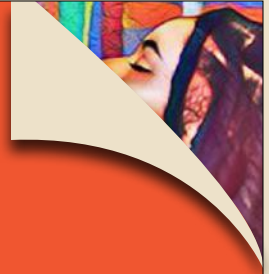
Date: 2020

Collection: Unframed presented by The Helis
Foundation, a project of Arts New Orleans

Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Jessica Strahan's artwork depicts the people and colorful culture which make up the New Orleans community. Taking inspiration from the food we eat and the connection it has to our heritage, the portraits in the mural combine people with the food and fabrics from their culture.

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CROWN MURAL UNVEILING JULY 1ST

Artwork Title: The CROWN Act Mural

Artist Name: Journey Allen

Location: Paris Parker Salon, 633 Carondelet

Date: July 1, 2022

Commissioning Agency: Dove and the CROWN Coalition with support from The Joy Collective and Arts New Orleans

Dove co-founded the CROWN Coalition to advance anti-hair discrimination legislation known as the CROWN Act, which stands for "Creating a Respectful and Open World for Natural Hair." The CROWN Act prohibits race-based hair discrimination, which is the denial of employment and educational opportunities because of hair texture or protective hairstyles including braids, locs, twists or bantu knots. The CROWN Act movement was created by a team of Black women leaders. **Join us on July 1st as we unveil NOLA's newest mural, honoring this groundbreaking civil rights action, event details at ArtsNewOrleans.org**



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Artwork Title: Gymnast

Artist Name: Enrique Alférez (local artist)

Location: Poydras Street at St. Charles Avenue

Date Created/Installed: 1990 – 91; 2015

Commissioning Agency/s:

Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(part of The Helis Foundation Collection)

Photo Credit: Rebecca Wilbee

Easily recognizable for its simple elegant lines, excellent craftsmanship, and iconic imagery, the work of Enrique Alférez has become an integral part of the visual landscape of the South. Inspired by a Lorado Taft lecture, the Mexican-born Alférez followed the sculptor to Chicago before moving to New Orleans in 1929. Alférez was a driven artist, dedicated to the democratic ideal of public art. Alférez died in 1999. His legacy of work, both public and private, stands as a testament to a life dedicated to art. Visit The Helis Foundation Enrique Alferez Sculpture Garden in New Orleans Botanical Garden, New Orleans City Park to see more examples of this iconic artist's work.

MONUMENTAL TOUR

PRESENTED BY KINDRED ARTS

@MONUMENTAL_TOUR IS A TRAVELING
CONTEMPLATE BLACK IDENTITY, REPRESENTATION



ALL POWER TO ALL PEOPLE

HANK WILLIS THOMAS

Hank Willis Thomas' All Power to All People is a provocative artwork combining the Afro pick and the Black Power salute, both icons of Black identity and empowerment. At approximately 28 feet tall, the work stands as a symbol of community, strength, perseverance, comradeship, and belonging. The sculpture's title references a legendary Black Panther Party slogan. All Power to All People is illustrative of the artist's longstanding investigation into the role public art plays in shaping collective discourse and societal values.

Photo: Sheila Pree Bright
for BLK Paper



PUBLIC ART EXHIBIT, EXAMINING ASPECTS OF THE BLACK AMERICAN EXPERIENCE. WE INVITE VIEWERS TO
ION, AND TO CONSIDER THE ROLE OF PUBLIC MONUMENTS IN OUR SOCIETY AND POPULAR CULTURE TODAY.

CURATED & PRODUCED BY MARSHA REID FOR @KINDRED_ARTS



KALIEF BROWDER :THE BOX BY COBY KENNEDY

Kennedy's sculpture *The Box* is a protest work. The steel and glass sculpture replicates the dimensions of a solitary confinement cell. The exterior features texts and graphs that explore the U.S. carceral system. The work is a critique of the gross abuses of civil liberties found in American incarceration systems. It aims to provide a creatively driven introduction to the myriad impacts of mass incarceration and to inspire participants to envision a transformed world without prisons. Viewed from the exterior and lit from below, the sculpture pays specific tribute to Kalief Browder, who was incarcerated for three years with neither trial nor proof.

Photo Dan Bradica

VISITING SCULPTURE ON VIEW JUNETEENTH THROUGH JULY 12

@ LAFAYETTE SQ. SOUTH MAESTRI PL.,



Artwork Title: Buoyancy: Love in Joy
Artist Name: MaPó Kinnord
Location: Poydras Street near Magazine Street
Date Created/Installed: 2021; 2021

Commissioning Agency/s:
Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(on loan from artist)
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

"BUOYANCY: Love in Joy is a painted hand-built ceramic sculpture celebrating my love for the city and people of New Orleans. Buoyancy is an act of floating and a state of optimism. My New Orleans is a city of bodies in interactive motion and spirits in regular cycles of absorption and ascension. For over 25 years, I have danced many dances with New Orleans, from my first experience at Congo Square with drummers releasing ancestor calls to acknowledge our past, to the union of children and elders fear free in the syncopated steps of a second line. Through storms of loss and the rebirth of healing, we float with the power of a tugboat. We dance strong and bright with life. My intention is to create an invitation to join a moment of joy." – MaPó Kinnord



Artwork Title: Headed to the Land We Were Promised (Glory)
Artist Name: Lonnie Holley
Location: Poydras Street near Magazine Street
Date Created/Installed: 2019; 2019

Commissioning Agency/s:
Poydras Corridor Sculpture Exhibition
(on loan from artist)
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Lonnie Holley created spontaneous silhouettes of figurative shapes nearly 17 feet tall, cut out of 3/4-inch carbon steel with a torch for this totemic sculpture, which speaks of generations of narrative history within a single form. Visit the Ogden Museum of Southern Art at 925 Camp Street in the Arts District to experience an entire gallery dedicate to the work of Lonnie Holley.



Artwork Title: Heart Full of Rhythm
Artist Name: Rontherin Ratliff (local artist)
Location: Ernest N. Morial Convention Center Pedestrian Park (Note: Sculpture is located at Poydras Avenue and Convention Center Blvd.)
Date: 2021

Commissioning Agency/s:
 Ernest N. Morial Convention Center
 with Arts New Orleans
Photo Credit: Courtesy of Helis Foundation

Heart Full of Rhythm pays homage to Louis Daniel Armstrong otherwise known as Satchmo. As one of the most influential figures in Jazz as a trumpeter and vocalist, we are reminded of his life work through his music. This piece acts as a visual reminder of the life and legacy of Satchmo. I was inspired by a quote of his that read "memory of things gone is important to a jazz musician". So the design of this trumpet reflects the fragmented nature of memories with just enough information to recall upon. My goal is to shine a light on the life of a musical legend raised in New Orleans. His legacy continues to pave the way for young musicians to find their voice in brass instruments.

"Satchmo" is one of the most beloved Sons of the Crescent City, and is honored through the Louis Armstrong International Airport, Armstrong Park, as well as the annual "Satchmo" Festival.



Artwork Title: Just Us
Artist Name: Sanford Biggers
Location: Contemporary Art Center -
900 Camp Street
Date: 2021

Collection: Unframed presented by The Helis
Foundation, a project of Arts New Orleans
Photo Credit: Devin Ball

Just Us features a clouded sky punctured with the words “Just Us” in a cutout-style font that reveals alternative views of more clouds. Just Us both evokes “justice” and highlights an unnamed group “us” suggesting the multifaceted and nuanced nature of the idea of “justice.”



Artwork Title: Alafia
Artist Name: Carl Joe Williams (local artist)
Location: New Orleans Cooper Inc. -
827 Tchoupitoulas Street
Date: 2019

Collection: Unframed presented by The Helis
Foundation, a project of Arts New Orleans
Photo Credit: Crista Rock

Williams' work involves figures and narratives, featuring complex color combinations, and rhythmic patterns inspired by geometries found in nature and through cultural echoes of African diasporic memory. The word “alafia” in Yoruba language celebrates inner-peace, tranquility, and good tidings.



Artwork Title: Sentinel (Mami Wata)

Artist Name: Simone Leigh

Location: St. Charles at Tivoli Circle

Date: On view Jan 22 - July 22

Commissioning Agency/s: Created for the
citywide art exhibition Prospect.5

Photo Credit: Doug MacCash

The title of this work means “guard” or “watchman,” and it honors the work done by activists, citizens, and New Orleans city officials to remove symbols of white supremacy from public view, while also suggesting the possibility for a new protective spirit at this central downtown location. Sentinel (Mami Wata) takes the diversity of African cultures in New Orleans as a starting point, evoking African folklore and spiritualities. Mami Wata, a water spirit or deity, is known under many names across the African diaspora, including Yemaya, Yemoja, and Iemanjá. Leigh’s sculpture holds forms of knowledge that have been passed down through spiritual and masking traditions in the city and beyond, wherein masking signifies transformation, not simply concealment.

Simone Leigh’s Sentinel (Mami Wata) occupies a revered place at the base of the column that was formerly occupied for more than 100 years by the Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Under the administration of Mayor Mitch Landrieu; the statue of General Lee as well as other homages to Confederate war were removed. While it was a tumultuous time in our city’s history, there were no riots or bloodshed. Sentinel does not erase the past of the space, but begins a new chapter of the city’s relationships with history, race, and equity.

EVEN MORE A

Gallery: Salon Gallery + Artist Studios

Location: Canal Place, 333 Canal Street - second floor near Anthropology

Exhibition: B[L]ACK SPACE by Nic Aziz and Candias Smith and to be BLACK is to be ART curated by Ifátùmínínú Bamgbàlà Arèsà

SALON gallery
+artist studios

Gallery: Stella Jones Gallery

Location: Place St. Charles 201 St. Charles Ave

Specializing in modern masters from around the world and exceptional art of the Diaspora, offering African American, Caribbean, and contemporary African art of all media for public and private collections.

Stella Jones
GALLERY

Gallery: Spillman Blackwell Fine Art

Location: 866 Camp Street

On view through July, a Summer Invitational exhibition featuring predominantly black artists, in addition to a selection of black artists from the roster including legendary musician George Clinton.

SPILLMAN | BLACKWELL
FINE ART

Gallery: The Helis Foundation John Scott Center

Location: 938 Lafayette Street, Suite 300

A hub for integrated arts and humanities programming unlike any in the Gulf South the center will open-to-the-public starting Friday, June 24, 2022



THE HELIS FOUNDATION
JOHN SCOTT CENTER

Artwork Title: Ocean Song

Artist Name: John T Scott

Location: Woldenberg Riverfront Park:
1 Canal Street



ART

Museum: New Orleans African American Museum

Location: 1418 Governor Nicolls Street

New Orleans African American Museum mission is to preserve the history and elevate the art, culture, and contributions of African Americans in New Orleans and the African Diaspora.

Museum: Le Musée de f.p.c., A House Musuem

Location: 2336 Esplanade Ave

Honoring the Legacy of New Orleans' Free People of Color

Gallery: Ashe' Cultural Arts Center

Location: 1712 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd

Celebrating the people, places, and philosophies of the African Diaspora

Over Essence weekend (July 1-4, 2022) Offering Daily Art Histroical Points of Interest Bus Tours leaving Lafayette Square call 504-569-9070 for information

Artwork Title: Caliban's Hands

Artist Name: Christopher Myers

Location: Baldwin & Co 1030 Elysian Fields Ave

Date Created/Installed: Visiting Sculpture on view June 17- July 12

Commissioning Agency/s: Presented by Kindred Arts



We hope you have enjoyed this Art Walk through the streets of the city of New Orleans. The city continues to invest in public art with 7.2 million dedicated over the next 6 years, with a focus on artists of color. This past year the city has purchased 60 pieces of art created by local artists of color to be installed in the city's public buildings.

SEE SOME ART

**SCAN THE QR CODE FOR A DIGITAL &
DOWNLOADABLE ART WALK MAP**



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@POYDRASCORRIDOR
#ESSENCEARTWALK
#MONUMENTALTOUR

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PLEASE SHARE YOUR ART EXPERIENCES
WITH US BELOW:**

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