

Employee's Lens Captures New Orleans Culture

March 23, 2010 11:00 AM Mary Cross
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Through Sunday (March 28), visitors to the New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History have the opportunity to see photography by Richard Keller, a support services supervisor in the Tulane Department of Facilities Services.



Mardi Gras Indians and Buffalo Soldiers are among Richard Keller's favorite subjects for his photography. (Photo by Richard Keller)

Nestled in the historic Faubourg Treme neighborhood, the museum is showing a mixed media exhibition by several artists called "The American Dream" that is a tribute to the legacy of Martin Luther King.

"I've been doing this forever, and I still feel like the new kid on the block," says Keller of his photography. "All I want is for people to see what I see."

"The American Dream" marks the fourth time the museum is featuring Keller's candid shots, which express his passion for life, art and the people of New Orleans. His day-to-day job at Tulane is supervising crews that move furniture and

equipment. "There's nothing better to shoot than the culture of this city," he says.

The two works in the exhibit have Keller beaming with pride. One piece is a black-and-white shot of the late Allison "Tootie" Montana, legendary Big Chief of the Yellow Pocahontas tribe of Mardi Gras Indians. The photograph depicts Montana on what Keller calls his "last ride."

Keller's fixation is creating portraits of wild and colorful ambassadors of New Orleans culture, ranging from his shots of second-line revelers to Buffalo Soldiers, a horseback krewe. The photos show Keller's unique vision and ability to "freeze time" with his camera. The other piece by Keller at the museum captures a circle of dancers as they beat tambourines in a moment of uninhibited movement.

The [New Orleans African American Museum of Art, Culture and History](#) is located at 1418 Gov. Nicholls St. It is open Wednesday through Saturday from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m.

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