Artists gain notice of new CAC curator

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mtravis@tulane.edu

There's a new art curator in town. "And she doesn't know us at all," says Teresa Cole, chair of the Newcomb Art Department at Tulane. Amy Mackie is "fresh and new to the city" as the new visual arts director at the Contemporary Arts Center, but she must like what she sees in the work of Tulane-affiliated artists.

Teresa Cole, one of the artists whose work is on display at the Contemporary Arts Center, creates a new piece in the Newcomb Art Department. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

In the current CAC exhibit in downtown New Orleans, "NOLA NOW, Part 1: Swagger for a Lost Magnificence," curated by Mackie, 13 of the 35 artists are Tulane faculty members, alumni or graduate students.

"I think it's exciting," says Cole. "It bodes well for the university in the New Orleans art community."

The exhibiting artists, including Cole, were selected from 426 visual artists living in the greater New Orleans region whose work is documented in a CAC database.

Cole created her piece, *Curling in on Itself*, in two stages. She printed contemporary patterns on thin, Japanese paper that she cut into 400 parts and transported to Kolkata (formerly known as Calcutta), India, in 2010. While in India she collected old saris, traditional garments worn by women, and glued strips of the saris to the backs of the paper strips. Then she curled the strips and strung them together with string to create a 25-foot-wide and 10-foot-tall installation piece.

"It's about the influences of one culture on another," she says, and how these influences often come full circle.

Other Tulane faculty members whose work is in the current CAC exhibit are Aaron Collier, Stephen Hilger, Gene Koss, Srdjan Loncar and Monique Zeringue. Tulane alumni in the show are Michele Basta, James Taylor Bonds and Debra Howell, along with graduate students Sophie T. Lvoff, Grace Mikell and Dave Greber.

The CAC exhibit is up through Jan. 29.