

The More You NOLA:

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mcross3@tulane.edu



Approximately 400 New Orleanians collaborated on the paintings displayed in "The People's Murals" exhibit housed in the Myrtle Banks Building, 1307 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd. (Photo by Paula Burch-Celentano)

During New Orleans' post-Katrina recovery, the story of the storm's impact was inscribed in paint, as many returning citizens kept the X-shaped tags scrawled on their homes by rescue teams as symbols of perseverance. ["The People's Murals"](#) exhibit demonstrates continuing community resilience through the same medium. The show, on display through Thursday, Oct. 15, on the third floor of the Myrtle Banks Building, 1307 Oretha Castle Haley Blvd., commemorates the 10th anniversary of Hurricane Katrina by presenting large-scale collaborative murals painted by hundreds of New Orleanians.

Featuring imagery as colorful and eclectic as the locals who produced the works, the free exhibit is presented by the [Creative Alliance of New Orleans](#) (CANO) and Alembic Community Development.

A nonprofit organization, CANO strives "to improve the ability of artists to develop sustainable careers," says executive director Jeanne Nathan.

"We're looking to grow the city's creative economy, which we believe to be at the heart of the city's future sustainability," Nathan says.

Local artist and urban planner Robert Tannen originally spearheaded the project during the Prospect.2 International Art Festival in 2011. Lining the walls of a shotgun house in the Lower Ninth Ward with massive canvas drop cloths, Tannen invited residents of all ages to channel their inner artist and create an "art by committee" piece together.

"He wanted people to make art instead of just viewing it," Nathan says.

Given no specific instructions, about 400 participants freely collaborated on the paintings. Some had never held a paintbrush before, Nathan says.

"It was very rewarding for the people who did it."

While the Prospect.2 project generated 23 canvases, this is the first full-scale exhibition of the murals. Eight of the synergetic paintings are on display, along with the works of local artists Ayo Scott, Allen Lefort, Talbot Palmer and Ron Bechet.

After the exhibit closes, the murals will be donated to community facilities, Nathan says.