

ARTS & CULTURE

Learn about N.O. iconic architectural styles at PRC

The lobby of the Preservation Resource Center of New Orleans' headquarters, in the Leeds-Davis Building at 923 Tchoupitoulas St., is devoted to a museum-style exhibit explaining, according to the title wall, "the greatest architecture museum of

all – the streets of New Orleans." "Influences & Architecture: How to read a New Orleans building" explores the historic origins and organic utility of design, from the colonial era to midcentury modern, Creole cottages and shotguns to American townhouses and ranch-style homes.

Actually, the lessons start in the precolonial era.

Also on the exhibit's title wall, the indigenous populations that predated the first colonists are credited with pioneering the concept of raised dwellings, a centuries-old practice still relevant.

The exhibit's attention to detail beyond the major dwelling styles – down to window and door designs, roof shapes, cladding styles and the fact that several "types" can be present in one building – makes for a great read.

"Our mission is to preserve New Orleans historic architecture, our culture, our neighborhoods, our cemeteries. We do that through advocacy and education and active programming," said Kristin Gisleson Palmer, the PRC's executive director, during a recent walk-through. "So, when you look at the advocacy and education component of it, it's really important to have tools to tell the story."

The exhibit is "great for tourists who want to know, but it's also really important for locals to understand, because you cannot separate the architecture from the culture of this city or the sense of place of this city," Palmer said, adding that learning how to "read" a house helps to understand the importance of individual neighborhoods.

Knowing your neighbors

The oldest Creole neighborhoods below Canal Street "bred us knowing your neighbor very well," Palmer continued.



PHOTOS BY DAVE WALKER

At the Preservation Resource Center's exhibit, the model homes have detachable roofs for further study of interior details.

With nonswampland at a premium, the homes were built tightly together, with frontage right at the street.

"And what did that breed? It bred stoops and porches, which became the social fabric of our neighborhoods and our communities," Palmer said.

Later, shotgun houses further refined the use of space on tight lots and today reflect how the influx of multiple cultures affected the streetscape.

"The shotgun is a wonderful example of how our city grew and the influences of different cultures," Palmer said. "So, we got the shotgun style from Africa by way of the Caribbean to New Orleans. And the beauty of the shotgun is that it fits so well into ... the way our lots run. They were narrow and long, and so it was such a fabulous use of space."

In addition to wall text and illustrations, the exhibit includes a table of miniature models of each house style. The models have detachable roofs for further study of interior details.

"These shotgun designs also had environmental benefits for this climate," Palmer said. "This architecture and these housing styles were created in an environment that was challenging, to say



'Influences & Architecture' is on display at the Preservation Resource Center celebrating New Orleans homes.

the least, with no air conditioning, no electricity, no indoor plumbing.

A lot of the way these houses were built speak to that.

"It's an elegant design – the tall ceilings to promote air flow, the use of transoms above doors, which again allowed the air flow to go through."

More climate defiance

The text for the exhibit was written by MaryNell Nolan-Wheatley and Michelle Shoriak; Susan Langenhennig Granger was project editor. The designers

were David Jack Browning and Liz Jurey.

The Preservation Resource Center, which has superb air conditioning, will be open on White Linen Night, the traditional sweltering act of climate defiance this year scheduled for Aug. 1. There are also displays about New Orleans neighborhoods and other resources to absorb.

"I think what I hear consistently, what I think a lot of people in this city are concerned about, is the loss of our culture," Palmer said.

"Our culture is intrinsically

MUSEUM CALENDAR

■ Two exhibits close July 19 at the Ogden Museum of Southern Art, "In the Beloved: A New Body of Work by Alexis McGrigg" and "Vicinal Visions: Dusti Bonge, Ida Kohlmeier & Dorothy Hood." ogdenmuseum.org.

■ The Museum of the Southern Jewish Experience kicks off its online Sit-a-Spell Summer Lecture Series at 6 p.m. Thursday with a presentation by Jennifer Caplan of the University of Cincinnati. The subject: "Southern Jews and Comedy." The series continues July 30 and Aug. 6. msje.org.

■ The Historic New Orleans Collection will host an Educator Day from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday. The theme will be the current traveling show "American Revolution: The Augmented Exhibition." The event is free with advance registration. hnoc.org.

■ Drawing on the Ogden Museum of Southern Art's permanent collection of vernacular art, the exhibit "The Dream is the Truth" opens July 25. The exhibit "Louisiana Contemporary 2026" opens there Aug. 1. ogdenmuseum.org.

■ The National WWII Museum will gather cast members and the creative team behind the miniseries "Band of Brothers" for a 25th-anniversary symposium July 31 and Aug. 1. The in-person program is sold out, but the panels will stream online at no charge. nationalww2museum.org.

tied to our neighborhoods. People love to say in New Orleans, 'Our culture bubbles up right from the streets.' Well, there's a reason for that. And architecture and the way a neighborhood has been built over time, the way it fosters that sense of community, is part of that. And if we continue to lose it, we will lose our culture."

Dave Walker focuses on behind-the-scenes coverage of the region's many museums here and at www.themuseumgoer.com. Email Dave at dave@themuseumgoer.com.

Golden mini-Mozarts mark anniversary of composer's birth

They're on display in his hometown of Salzburg

BY PHILIPP JENNE
Associated Press

SALZBURG, Austria — Visitors to Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's hometown can see the composer — and his dog — in miniature as Salzburg celebrates the 270th anniversary of his birth. But they shouldn't wait too long.

The Mozarteum Foundation on Wednesday unveiled 300 gold-colored statuettes of Mozart, which are less than 20 inches tall.

They were designed by German concept artist Ottmar Hörl.

Mozart was born on Jan. 27, 1756, in the Austrian city, where the Mozarteum Foundation offers concerts, maintains Mozart museums and supports research on him.

"I didn't want to do a monument of Mozart. There are already enough of these.



ASSOCIATED PRESS PHOTO BY MATTHIAS SCHRADER

German artist Ottmar Hörl from Nuremberg walks through his installation comprising of 400 gold-colored Mozart sculptures for the 270th birthday of composer Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart in Salzburg, Austria.

But I wanted to show his human side, that he was a normal human being despite his genius," Hörl told The Associated Press.

To give the statues a human touch, Hörl depicted the composer with his favorite dog, Pimperl. Mozart and his family were known to take long walks with their dogs in the Mirabell

Garden, next to where they lived.

The mini-Mozarts populate not only the garden, but also Mozart's former living quarters as well as several pavilions. In all, 400 statues were made, but only 300 are on display at present. The rest are being kept in reserve in case of theft.

"Two already got stolen

within the last few hours," Linus Klumpner of the Mozarteum Foundation said. But the statues are meant to attract a broader range of visitors and get them hooked on Mozart's Music.

"You come here, maybe you see the small golden heads shimmering in the sun on the horizon. And people become curious," Klumpner said. "And then a process begins which is very much in our interest. That is to bring new people in contact with Mozart."

For Hörl, the theft of his artworks in nothing new. At an installation in Bayreuth, Germany, a complete array of statues of Richard Wagner was stolen within 10 days.

"That's just the nature of public space. That means when you work as an artist in a public space, you mustn't complain about what is happening there," Hörl said. "It ranges from destruction to theft. That's just how it is."

The Mozart statues are

scheduled to remain on display until Aug. 30. People who would like to own one but would prefer not to steal it can purchase one for \$114 — while supplies last.

Hörl is known for his sculptures made from polymer.

In 2010, he displayed 10,000 plastic owls in Athens.

A "Homage to Dürer" showcased oversized plas-

tic copies of Albrecht Dürer's hare at the Daegu art museum in South Korea.

In 2009, German prosecutors decided against investigating Hörl over a series of golden garden gnomes doing the Hitler salute, under a law that forbids using insignia forbidden by the German constitution. Hörl himself intended the gnomes as satire against the Nazis' ideology.

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