



To: Design Review Board (DRB)  
From: DMC Staff, Planning & Development Department  
Date: June 24, 2015  
RE: South End Underpass Public Art Project (DRB #15-42)

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Background:

In 2014, DMC staff and the Henry Turley Company presented a joint proposal to the Center City Development Corporation (CCDC) to make improvements at two (2) railroad underpasses in the South End neighborhood. The underpasses along Florida Street and South Main Street are dark, dirty, unpleasant, and discourage walking and biking in the area. The CCDC initially approved funding in the amount of \$80,000 for Phase I of the South End Underpass Improvement Project.

The scope of work in Phase I includes cleaning the concrete surfaces, removing a portion of the elevated roadbed at Florida Street, adding lighting above the sidewalk at two (2) underpasses, and the fees associated with traffic control, contracting, and design. The Henry Turley Company agreed to provide development services as an in-kind contribution to the overall project. These services include analysis of existing conditions, project scoping and design, project management, outreach to relevant agencies, and securing any required approvals.

Current Status of Project:

Over the past year, the Henry Turley Company has been actively securing the required approvals while working to keep the project within budget. Phase I work began in April, 2015 and is now underway. Trash was cleared from the sidewalks and pedestrian lighting has been installed in both underpasses. Roadbed removal at the Florida Street underpass is scheduled to be completed within weeks. Phase II of the project involves adding public art to each underpass.

At its June 17, 2015 meeting, the CCDC approved the scope of work and budget for public art. The Henry Turley Company will continue to provide project oversight and will secure any required approvals for the public art scope of work. DRB review and approval of the public art is required because the CCDC, a DMC affiliated Board, is funding the project.

### Public Art Proposal:

DMC staff set the following goals for the underpass public art:

- Improve the overall pedestrian experience
- Add color, visual interest, and vibrancy to the underpasses
- Use art to enhance the sense of “gateway” into the neighborhood
- Create art that reflects the history and character of the South Main District
- Design the art to be as “low maintenance” as possible

The public art will consist of two (2) separate painted mural installations. Both installations will be designed and painted by local artist Anthony Lee. The mural at the Florida Street underpass will feature vignettes that highlight some of the iconic images, places, and people of the South Main neighborhood. The mural at the South Main underpass will be a geometric composition that is more contemporary and abstract in character. Attached is a project budget, artist resume, and conceptual design plans.

### Design Guidelines:

Per the DRB’s Design Guidelines, public art is highly encouraged as an amenity in Downtown Memphis and as a way of bringing visual interest and special identity to individual sites and neighborhoods. Public art has the potential to not only enhance the site where it is located but have a positive impact on the broader neighborhood and Downtown community.

The Design Guidelines provide the following direction regarding public art:

- Public art should be complementary to the primary structure on site and the surrounding context.
- A public art piece located exterior to a building should be suitable for outdoor display, including its long-term maintenance and conservation requirements.
- Public art should help establish landmarks and points of interest Downtown.
- Design public art that respects neighborhood identity and reinforces the unique character of Downtown Memphis.
- Where appropriate, use public art to help create or enhance places of community gathering and active public use.
- Install public art where it can be comfortably experienced by pedestrians.
- Avoid locations and public art designs that impede pedestrian flow or could endanger the safety of adjacent property, pedestrians, or vehicular traffic.
- Consider a public art location that will frame or enhance an important public view opportunity.
- Consider using public art strategically to help encourage the use of courtyards, plazas, and other public spaces.

A wide range of art mediums, from sculpture to murals and artistic lighting, can be appropriate Downtown. Likewise, public art can occur at a variety of scales, depending upon the specific purpose of the art piece and its particular site and context. For example, while large art pieces can be appropriate in an urban Downtown, smaller pieces can be very effective when they are planned to occur as “surprises,” or “accents” to the public realm. Critical goals for this specific project include improving the pedestrian experience and strengthening the sense of “gateway” into the neighborhood.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff believes that the proposed public art will be an asset to the neighborhood and is consistent with the direction outlined in the Design Guidelines. **Staff is supportive of the project and recommends DRB approval.**

Other Considerations:

Maintenance is an important consideration for any public art project. While no public art installation is maintenance free, the project team has worked diligently with the artist to try and make the proposed artwork as low maintenance as possible by limiting the total surface area where paint will be applied, limiting the total number of paint colors, incorporating simple shapes that can be touched-up without expert help, and designing the mural to avoid areas where water staining and discoloration appear more frequent. To the extent long-term maintenance is required, DMC staff will work with the CCDC to ensure that an adequate budget is established for that purpose.

It should also be noted that in addition to the underpasses at Florida Street and South Main Street, E. Carolina Avenue also contains a similar underpass. The project team initially discussed adding public art at all three underpasses, but ultimately decided to focus this public art project only on the Florida and South Main locations. These two underpasses are clearly in the worst condition and in need of the most attention. Moreover, the E. Carolina underpass recently received new pedestrian lighting and railings as part of the Main 2 Main project and is well-lit and clean. Focusing now on the two underpasses in the worst condition does not preclude the option of adding public art to the E. Carolina site at a later date. The CCDC, Urban Art Commission, or another entity could revisit the issue and add public art to the E. Carolina underpass if desired in the future.

# South End Walkable Neighborhood

South End  
Crump Blvd  
Crescent Bluffs  
South Junction

**Underpass  
Gateways**



**CONNECT**

Central Station Transit  
South Main & Downtown  
Main-to-Main  
Memphis Farmers Market



G E Patterson

Memphis  
Farmers  
Market

Central  
Station  
Transit

Front

Central  
Station  
[future]

Main

South  
Bluffs

Georgia

South  
Junction I

South  
Junction II

Riverside

Carolina

Florida

South  
Junction I

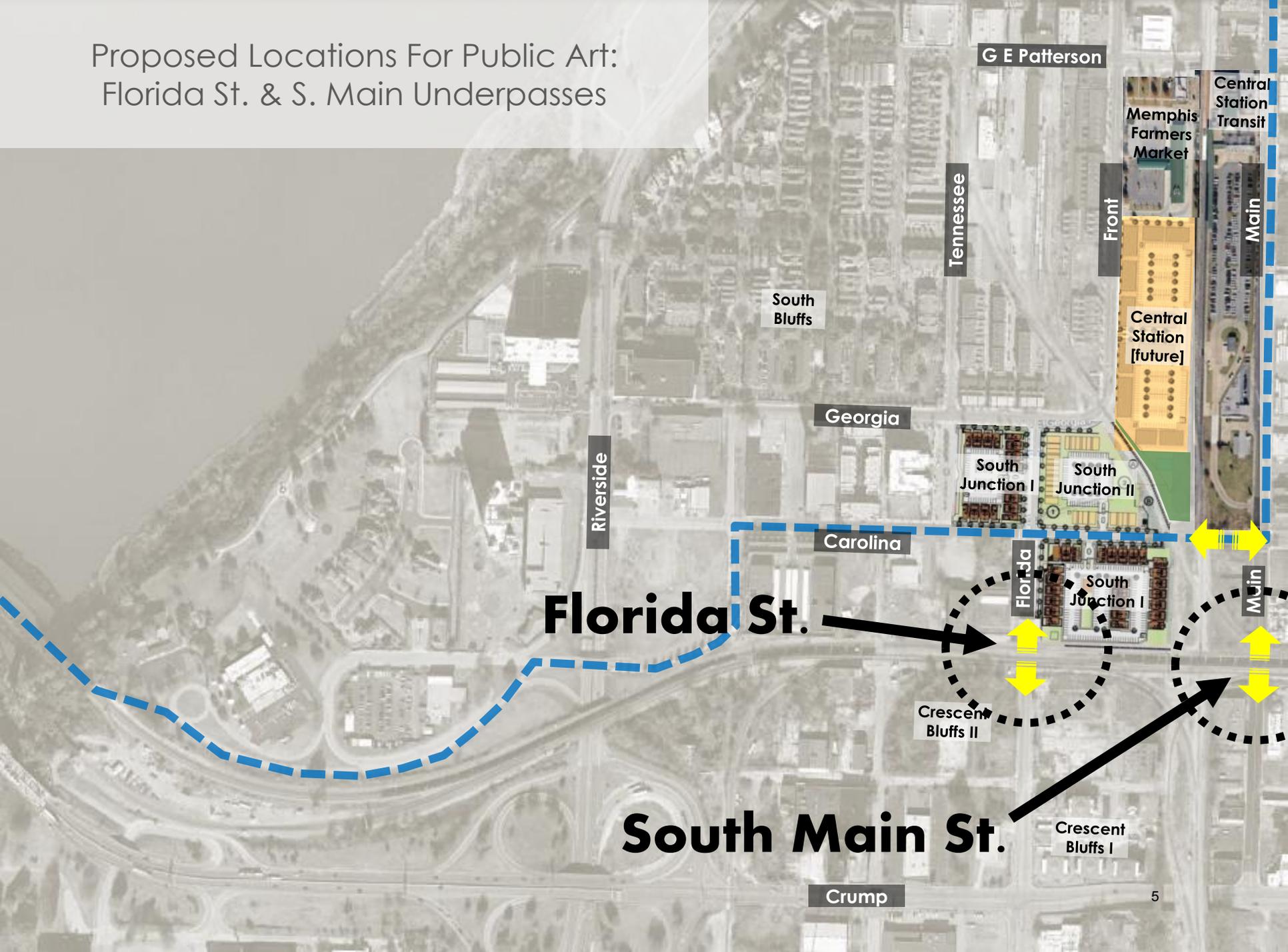
Main

Crescent  
Bluffs II

Crescent  
Bluffs I

Crump

# Proposed Locations For Public Art: Florida St. & S. Main Underpasses



**Florida St.**

**South Main St.**

# Florida Street Underpass



**Perception of how dangerous or hostile a place is can at times be more detrimental to an area than tangible threats.**

The Architect's Newspaper 05/23/13

Main Street



Florida Street





Florida

Main



East Wall



West Wall



Full Color Image Vignettes



Line Drawing Samples

Sample Drawing with Flat Color Fill-in



East



North Entrance



West

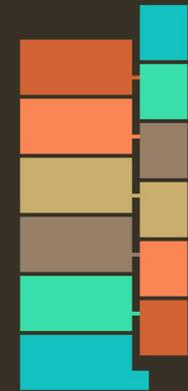
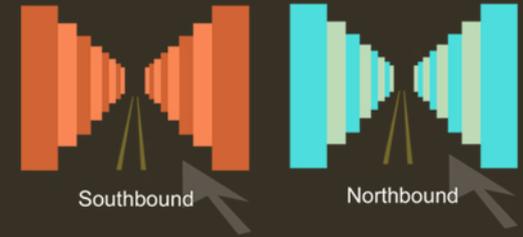
# Florida Street Underpass Paint Proposal

June 2015

Anthony D. Lee  
mrpnut77@hotmail.com  
901.406.4978



Columns Visual Effect



Palette



### South Main Street Underpass Paint Proposal

Anthony D. Lee  
mrpnu777@hotmail.com  
June 2015

6-color, site-specific plan designed for the kinetic visual effect created by the interlacing rows of columns while moving through the space.

Colors and circle shapes quickly interchange through parallax, creating a constant viewing scenario while travelling by vehicle. <sup>10</sup>

## **South End Underpass Improvement Project: Artist Statement**

### **Artist Statement - South Main Street Underpass Mural**

From a pedestrian's viewpoint, there are four planes of foreground surface being created by the columns and far wall. From a moving driver's point of view, three planes are present. This density of concrete columns makes it difficult to read any imagery on the walls, even flattened figurative icons. The space is simply too interrupted by the columns for ideal viewing, and the inlaid concrete wall surfaces are also small, when compared to the surface opportunities on the Florida Street underpass. However, because it's a traffic thoroughway, the density and repetition of the forms can allow for some kinetic viewing. A passing car will observe the parallax effect, watching a moving pattern of colors quickly exchanging viewing angles to interact with the driving viewers. (For reference, this artistic concept is akin to Yaacov Agam's style of painting, which utilizes the fourth dimension of motion to create how his work is viewed.)

Estimated time to complete mural – 1 week

### **Artist Statement - Florida Street Underpass Mural**

It was requested of me to create a series of murals for this site of various South Main imagery. Given a list of desired content, ten large square image vignettes that are distinguishingly Downtown Memphis will be painted on both sides from the open center to the northern half of this site. The mural images will be approximately 12' x 12' on a solid gray ground to frame and contain the image, for additional water stain protection from above. Also, a darker gray drop shadow will be added, to visually relieve mural image from surface. The images will be a flattened-style with heavy lines and limited color gradation (blending and rendering), for easy repair or repaint.

Estimated time to complete mural – 3 weeks

## **Maintenance Approach**

Below are the overall objectives for preserving the integrity of these painted projects.

- Create a low-maintenance design, to accommodate for visual disturbances caused by moisture staining and dirt build-up.
- Create a long term paint restoration (and anti-graffiti) plan, by using limited amount of select paint colors in simple shapes.

In the Main Street design, a limited palette of just six (6) exterior stock paint colors from a popular brand will be used. If any damage occurs, a simple retouch of one of the colors will repair easily. Also, the painted forms are guided by the architecture of the concrete columns and walls, and the circles on the inlaid areas should be simple enough to repaint with minimal skill.

Most of the underpass environment will not be painted, only cleaned by pressure washing during preparation.

With the Florida Street design, each mural will have an anti-graffiti clear coat application. Also, the images will be painted in such a way (shapes of color contained by dark line) that a flat color mixed to match should cover any blemish or staining that is persistent on the top clear coat. Also, each mural will have a grayish painted color ground to reduce staining at top and bottom, and to also enhance visibility against the large expanse of raw concrete. It also acts as a painted interface between the protected image and the unprotected concrete, in case of vandalism.

### **Project Budget: South Main Street Underpass**

<b>Equipment</b> 16' mobile built scaffolding; 4k electric generator rental; 2 industrial paint sprayers; large enclosed truck rental	<b>\$1,800</b>
<b>Paint</b> 30 gallon usage estimate for primer color base; 40 gallon estimate for durable finish covering	<b>\$3,150</b>
<b>Supplies</b> Items such as rushes, rollers, tape, ladders, pattern-making items, paper rolls, traffic cones, safety equipment, coveralls, trash bags, gloves, containers, etc.	<b>\$650</b>
<b>Insurance</b> Commercial liability and workman's compensation	<b>\$450</b>
<b>Labor</b> Planning and design, assistant labor, production crew, and process management	<b>\$8,900</b>
<b>Site Preparation (sub-contracted)</b> Pressure washing and scraping, concrete resurfacing, prime surfaces to be painted	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Misc.</b> Printing needs, volunteer comforts, fuel, taxes, etc.	<b>\$350</b>
<b>Contingency (10%)</b>	<b>\$1,780</b>
<hr/> <b>Total</b>	<hr/> <b>\$19,580</b>

## **Project Budget: Florida Street Underpass**

<b>Equipment</b> 16' mobile built scaffolding; 4k electric generator rental; 2 industrial paint sprayers; large enclosed truck rental	\$1,600
<b>Paint</b> 12 gallon usage estimate for primer color base; 12 gallon estimate for durable finish covering; 12 gallon protective coating	\$2,220
<b>Supplies</b> Items such as rushes, rollers, tape, ladders, pattern-making items, paper rolls, traffic cones, safety equipment, coveralls, trash bags, gloves, containers, etc.	\$1,900
<b>Insurance</b> Commercial liability and workman's compensation	\$450
<b>Labor</b> Planning and design, assistant labor, production crew, and process management	\$11,900
<b>Misc.</b> Printing needs, volunteer comforts, fuel, taxes, etc.	\$750
<b>Contingency (10%)</b>	\$1,882
<hr/> <b>Total Budget</b>	<hr/> <b>\$20,702</b>

## **Artist Bio & Résumé**

Anthony D. Lee (b. 1979) has been influenced by the culture and heritage of the places that he's lived, though he considers himself a Memphis Native. Lee credits his West Indian roots as an important contributing factor in his creative development- his vivid palette was inspired in St. Croix, of the U.S. Virgin Islands, his boyhood home. During the 1990's, Lee was a student of Bill Hicks, a teacher who doubled as an instructor at the nearby Memphis College of Art. The artist studied briefly at NC State's School of Design in 2001, after having served a stint as a paratrooper in the U.S. Army's 82d Airborne Division.

Lee's initial body of works were mixed-media panels with heavy color saturation and symbolic narrative content. His work has been featured at the Memphis Brooks Museum of Art, Powerhouse, Dixon Gallery, Memphis College of Art, Arkansas Arts Center, National Civil Rights Museum, Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts, and several galleries throughout the U.S. He has also created many public art projects and large-scale mural works, of which one was nationally recognized and awarded in 2009. His au courant mode of painting is geometric abstraction with neo-minimalist sensibilities that echo Ellsworth Kelly and Peter Halley. Lee

currently lives in Memphis and manages Marshall Arts, an alternative gallery and studios facility.

### **Exhibitions and Highlights:**

#### **2015**

Respond, Smack Mellon - New York City, New York

Public/Art/ists, Crosstown Arts - Memphis, TN

\*Lead Mural Artist, Schweinehaus - Memphis, TN

\*Manager, Marshall Arts Gallery – Memphis, TN

#### **2014**

Because of Maxine, Delta Arts - West Memphis, AR

Memphis Pulse: 2013, University of Memphis - Memphis, TN

\*Lead Mural Artist, Monroe Avenue - Memphis, TN

\*Lead Mural Artist, KWEM Radio - West Memphis, AR

\*Lead Mural Artist, Zebra Lounge - Memphis, TN

#### **2013**

Present Tense, Dixon Gallery- Memphis, TN

Memphis Social, MCA Nesin Graduate School - Memphis, TN

Singular Masses, MCA Nesin Graduate School - Memphis, TN

\*Lead Mural Artist, Overton Square – Memphis, TN

\*Lead Mural Artist, Griffin Garden – Memphis, TN

\*Manager, Marshall Arts Gallery – Memphis, TN

\*Panel Speaker, Dixon Gallery– Memphis, TN

#### **2012**

Soul of a City, Brooks Museum of Art- Memphis, TN

Inner Workings, Memphis Theological Seminary - Memphis, TN

\*Studio Assistant, Penland School of Crafts – Penland, NC

\*ArtsMemphis, Emmet O’Ryan Award – Memphis, TN

\*Manager, Marshall Arts Gallery – Memphis, TN

\*Creative Consultant, The Consortium MMT – Memphis, TN

#### **2011**

Collaborations, Delta Cultural Center– Helena, AR

\*Asst. Mural Artist, Central High School – Memphis, TN

\*Manager, Marshall Arts Gallery – Memphis, TN

#### **2010**

A Modernist Ouroboros, A N Ferguson Architects – Memphis, TN

\*Manager, Marshall Arts Gallery – Memphis, TN

\*Asst. Mural Artist, Kendall College of Art and Design – Grand Rapids, MI

\*Cover Image of Meet Memphis Annual Magazine – Memphis, TN

## **2009**

Voices of a New South, Dixon Gallery – Memphis, TN  
Collaborations, African-American Cultural Center – Chattanooga, TN  
Off The Wall, Marshall Arts – Memphis, TN  
A Class of Hicks’, Memphis College of Art – Memphis, TN (Curator)  
\*Asst. Mural Artist, Rhodes-Hill Mural – Memphis, TN  
\*Vollintine-Evergreen Community Poster, Rhodes College - Memphis, TN  
\*Selected Artist, Best of 2008, Americans for the Arts – Wash., DC  
\*Panel Speaker, Hunter Museum – Chattanooga, TN

## **2008**

Collaborations, Hearne Fine Art – Little Rock, AR  
Richard Wright at One-Hundred, Nat’l Civil Rights Museum – Memphis, TN  
Merge Again, Marshall Arts- Memphis, TN (Curator)  
Embrace: National Black Fine Art Show, Mason Murer - Atlanta, GA  
Summer Group Show, L|Ross Gallery- Memphis, TN  
Reclamation of Color, Fuel Room @ Power House- Memphis, TN (Solo)  
The Crucian Condition, Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts- St. Croix, USVI  
Small Wonders, ArtJaz Gallery- Philadelphia, PA  
Struggle Candy, Hearne Fine Art- Little Rock, AR (Solo)  
\*Artist-in-Residence, Caribbean Museum Center for the Arts- St. Croix, USVI  
\*Scholastic Art Competition Judge, Brooks Museum of Art – Memphis, TN

## **2007**

Holiday Group Show, L|Ross Gallery- Memphis, TN  
50th Annual Delta Exhibition, Arkansas Arts Center- Little Rock, AR  
Summer Group Show, ArtJaz Gallery- Philadelphia, PA  
Embrace: National Black Fine Art Show, Mason Murer - Atlanta, GA  
Under the Sun; Brooks Introduces, Brooks Museum of Art- Memphis, TN (Solo)  
Objectively Woman, Rhodes College- Memphis, TN (Solo)  
Spring Review, FedEx World Headquarters- Memphis, TN  
\*First Tennessee Bank, 4th Annual ArtForum, -Memphis, TN  
\*Public Art Project Commission, MATA Train Station Wall- Memphis, TN  
\*Public Art Project Commission, Pierotti Park- Memphis, TN  
\*Panel Speaker, Rhodes College– Memphis, TN

## **2006**

Suns, Stars, & Spirals, Southside Gallery- Oxford, MS  
Salon Two, Memphis College of Art On The Street Gallery- Memphis, TN  
Deep Roots, Hearne Fine Art Gallery- Little Rock, AR  
Delta Axis 639 Exhibit Version 4.0, Marshall Arts- Memphis, TN

## **2005**

Southern Trees Bare Strange Fruit III, Langston Hughes Institute- Buffalo, NY  
The Salon, Memphis College of Art On The Street Gallery- Memphis, TN  
Sweet Magnolia Root, Art on 38 Gallery- Philadelphia, PA

Sugar Ditch Rich, Tunica Museum- Tunica, MS

\*University of Tennessee at Memphis, Black History Month Poster- Memphis, TN

\*U. S. Virgin Islands Agriculture Festival Poster- St. Croix, USVI

\*Island Art and Soul Calendar, Caribbean Museum Center- St. Croix, USVI

## **2004**

Deep Ellum, Stephanie Ward Gallery- Dallas, TX Artists Open Studios, Mattress Factory- Atlanta, GA

Church, Inc, Tennessee State University- Nashville, TN

\*Memphis Downtowner Magazine, Photography Contest Winner- Memphis, TN