

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 184

BY SENATORS QUINN AND DUPLESSIS

A RESOLUTION

To commend New Orleans artist, Jana Napoli, and YA/YA Alumni Artists on their mixed media composition, *Floodwall*, and to congratulate them on receipt of an invitation to exhibit, extended by the United States Department of State, in its embassies in Warsaw, Poland and Berlin, Germany as cultural envoys from the state of Louisiana.

WHEREAS, since the 1970's, Jana Napoli, a prolific painter and mixed media artist, has exhibited her work extensively in solo and group shows, in galleries, and in privately-held collections throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, in 1988, she opened the doors of her New Orleans studio to a group of commercial art students from the local vocational high school and founded YA/YA, Inc., Young Aspirations/Young Artists; and

WHEREAS, since that time she has turned her creative energies toward the program's evolution into a model for progressive youth development that has garnered both national and international acclaim; today, she serves as honorary chair of its advisory council; and

WHEREAS, *Floodwall* is a memorial to commemorate the tragic effects of Hurricane Katrina on the residents of New Orleans and to convey the universal truths of loss and new beginnings; and

WHEREAS, *Floodwall* is as a collection of hundreds of furniture drawers salvaged from the debris scattered in the wake of the storm with each identified by the street address where it was recovered; and

WHEREAS, these drawers from kitchen cabinets, bureaus, and desks were assembled onto a vertical surface to create an installation intended as a monument to the victims of the storm to represent their loss of life and precious possessions; and

WHEREAS, the art experience of *Floodwall* has struck a distinct chord with many observers who draw comparisons to floods and other disasters, to the Holocaust, to the plight of refugees who flee tyrannical regimes, and to the fate of the disenfranchised who are denied equal protection and due process before the law; and

WHEREAS, Jana Napoli and the YA/YA Alumni artists, Carlos Neville, Gentelle Pedescleaux, Madania Graves, and Turrón Patterson translate these ideas into handiwork such as scraps of paper and love letters, cloth, pictures, and other personal items nestled in the drawers; mementos hastily abandoned by the owner; and

WHEREAS, the human focus of *Floodwall* raises the poignant question of "what do you take, what do you leave behind?"; and

WHEREAS, *Floodwall* will be exhibited in Warsaw and Berlin, together with community programs, interactive scenarios, and performances led by YA/YA Alumni artists during the months of July through September 2010; and

WHEREAS, the *Floodwall* installation itself serves as the framework for related public performances and workshops on community building and civic education, especially suited for young people, the elderly, and ethnic minorities; and

WHEREAS, the YA/YA Alumni are an amalgamation of multi-talented artists from a variety of creative disciplines and backgrounds; and

WHEREAS, alumni artist and cultural envoy, Carlos Neville, is a professional painter, cartoonist, dancer, and street performer with Dragon Master Showcase, and serves as a member of the Board of Directors of YA/YA, Inc.; and

WHEREAS, Gentelle Pedescleaux, is a talented dancer, performance and visual arts educator, and has dedicated her talents to community service in the Baton Rouge area; and

WHEREAS, Turrón Patterson is a visual artist and shares his creativity with local New Orleans Youth; and

WHEREAS, YA/YA, Inc. Senior Guild Member, Madania Graves, is a multi-media artist, production and studio manager, and youth arts mentor; and

WHEREAS, YA/YA, Inc., founder and *Floodwall* creator and curator, Jana Napoli, is an internationally renowned mixed-media artist and Metairie native, who has dedicated the last twenty years to the development of opportunities for New Orleans youth, to cultivate their talents, and to boost their self-confidence through the use of creative processes; and

WHEREAS, the team of Louisiana artists, YA/YA, Inc., have greatly contributed to a better understanding of American democratic society and its values of tolerance, diversity, empowerment of women and minorities, and dedication to community service.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate of the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby commend artists, Jana Napoli and the YA/YA Alumni Artists, as envoys and ambassadors of Louisiana's rich culture, congratulate them on their international recognition, and wish for them much success in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to Jana Napoli and the Alumni Artists of YA/YA.

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE