
THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN'

By Joy Reed Belt



About seventeen years ago, Cynthia Wolf and I conspired to start a monthly gallery walk. We planned to host the walk on the first Friday of every month. Cynthia Wolf owned the Adelante Studio at 3001A Paseo. She had lived in San Antonio and was very familiar with its River Walk. Through my travels, I knew that in major cities all over the world, groups of artists and galleries would organize at least one event a month to celebrate the arts.

Cynthia and I thought hosting such an event would not only help us promote artists and sell art, but it would bring traffic and distinction to The Paseo. Well, what seemed appealing and logical to us was not particularly well received by our cohorts. We met with them as a group, as well individually, and tried to sell our idea. No one believed it would work. "You really think people are going to come down to Paseo and buy art on a weekend night?" "Look, I work all day. I don't want to work at night." When we could not persuade the entire group, we tried to get just some of the galleries in strategic locations to open. We could not pull that off either. So, Cynthia and I decided, gulp, just the two of us would try it.

We both selected the artists we wanted to feature, wrote press releases, bought a few bottles of wine and nervously waited for First Friday to arrive. Of course, it started raining that

morning and a feeling of doom and despair set in. There may have been a couple of other galleries that decided at the last minute to open with us, but I don't remember. What I do remember is that three people attended my first First Friday Opening. A woman who lived in Heritage Hills and was curious about the artists I had promoted and another woman with her adult son. Neither of these three people had ever been in my Gallery. The mother and son purchased a small bronze sculpture by a western artist. Cynthia was located on Paseo Drive, near a restaurant and had more traffic. She sold a couple of paintings. The rest, as they say, is history. The Paseo has consistently provided Oklahoma City a unique art and cultural experience each and every First Friday for many years. It's become a tradition.



Beth Hammack, "Color Plague," Acrylic on Canvas,
24 x 48 in., \$1,200



Beth Hammack Talks May 2020 Exhibit, "The Way
Things Appear"

But the First Friday Gallery Walk will not be happening in its usual fashion in May due to the pandemic. However, The Paseo Arts Association is hosting "First Friday From Home," via live streaming. The event features music, video clips from the merchants and galleries and the ability to buy art and merchandise online with half or more of the proceeds going to people in the Paseo Community who have become unemployed due to the virus. You can visit the Paseo Arts District on Instagram, Facebook, or Twitter for up to date information on how you can participate and enjoy.

JRB Art at The Elms is virtually presenting Beth Hammack's art during the month of May and June. Also, her work can be seen by appointment in the gallery and on our website at: www.jrbartgallery.com.

As Bob Dylan wrote and sang in another tumultuous period in our history, "[The Times They Are A-Changin'.](#)" Stay tuned and stay safe.



Come senators, congressmen
Please heed the call
Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled
There's a battle outside
And it is ragin'
It'll soon shake your windows
And rattle your walls
For the times they are a-changin'

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