

At the time of Rabbit Whole's creation, however, we didn't have a place to sell such big pieces, and we didn't even know if they would sell at all. One day, a massage therapist I have seen for years gave me a message while she was working on me. "There are so many people standing behind and around you who want to help right now," she said. "I sense that they are your ancestors, and all you have to do is ask." So I started asking. I asked everyday. A few weeks later, an unexpected opportunity presented itself. A gallery space across the street from a dear friend's gallery in New Orleans' French Quarter (and a block away from other friends' galleries) was going to be available. Fellow artist Ann Marie Cianciolo and I jumped at the idea of co-owning a gallery space. Every moment we imagined scenarios that might derail our crazy plan, but nothing did. My objective thoughts of, "I don't have enough money, don't live anywhere close to New Orleans, and don't know what I am doing," were replaced by the subjective knowledge that this was exactly what I had asked for.

The opportunities continued to flow from one moment to the next, as so many people helped us get our gallery up and running. Now, 1 ½ years later, I co-own Gallery Two on Royal Street in the French Quarter of New Orleans—something I never dreamed possible. We are female-owned and operated along a two-block section of Royal Street that has a statistically large number of women-owned galleries. There is a community of creative souls on that stretch of street who share an aesthetic sensibility. A narrative, surreal, fantastical, humorous, thoughtful vibe resonates through the galleries there. It turned out that Gallery Two was that thing I needed so badly but just didn't know what it looked like.

As the story goes, I had some ancestors who lived in New Orleans 100 years ago, and one of them was a female artist. I never knew they lived in New Orleans until we opened the gallery. I met that female artist, my great grandmother Ethel P. Canfield, when I was a few months old, just before she died of breast cancer. She was a homemaker who used to paint watercolors of the French Quarter during her time in New Orleans. Some of the buildings in her paintings are a few blocks from our gallery. Magic abounds in this world, and creating art helps me find it.



More on Betsy

GalleryTwoNola.com

Facebook: facebook.com/g2Nola

Instagram: @g2Nola

P.S. I Love This!

I have several stuffed animals in my studio, including this monkey. I put beaded eyes in some of them. They are worn with the love of children, and they bring me peace. I talk to them. I have been putting them in little beaded environments lately. They tell me stories of magical lands where anything is possible.

