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PLUS Catalyst Voices: Insights, Ventures and Explorations of the Pratt Design Management Community



Carly Clark, graduate of the Design Management program at Pratt, recently had her work featured in GOOD Magazine. Carly is a graphic designer who helps nonprofits and small businesses achieve their business goals through effective use of strategic design. She specializes in design products for the urban planning industry.

Carly is currently the creative director for the Livable Streets Initiative (www.livablestreets.org), a division of an open-source software development firm, The Open Planning Project (www.theopenplanningproject.org). The Livable Streets Initiative works to make our city streets safer, cleaner and more fun, while reducing our dependence on cars. It operates as a place where people can network, connect, and organize with like-minded people.

For the April 7th piece in GOOD Magazine, titled: The Street of the Future is a Livable Street, Carly worked with the editor of Livable Streets Initiative's blog, Aaron Naparstek to put together the spread using a rendering she had made. Aaron wrote the text. And the design team at GOOD turned the article into the interactive graphic.

Prior to joining Livable Streets, Carly was the Art Director at Project for Public Spaces (www.pps.org), which helps communities around the world transform their towns into thriving economic and social centers. In addition to her Master's In Design Management, Carly earned her undergraduate degree in architecture from Wellesley College.

When Carly isn't working to improve our urban environment, she's busy obsessing about the home environment on her blog, Mochi Home (www.mochihome.com). Mochi Home is a website that creatively gives viewers free and useful decorating tips by using visual renderings to save consumers money and time.



Reeta Gyamlani, founding designer of NY city-based Farrago Design (www.farragodesign.com), and Pratt DM graduate. Her design firm prides itself in fusing a perfect blend of eastern and western elements through use of material, fabric and light.

An important aspect of her work is the design philosophy of taking a modern approach on old, dying crafts. At Farrago Design, they have been working with crafts people to modernize their skills so they can continue their specialty while remaining relevant in the modern home market. Additionally, they integrate sustainable design practices such as water-based glues, recycled packaging and FSC certified, Brazilian factories.

JOURNEY TO THE HEART OF NEW ORLEANS *by Holly Burns*

On the morning of Monday, April 20th, Phyllis, Becky and I woke up at the crack of dawn and set off for Newark Airport. Although it appeared that we were just beginning our journey to New Orleans, the journey had actually begun months earlier over beers at a bar near Pratt Manhattan while unwinding after class. We talked about our shared passion in helping empower communities to rebuild after devastation, Fast-forward through many conversations and hours of research; we were on our way to volunteer with the New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity.

We are Masters students in the Design Management Program at Pratt Institute. Together, we formed a team called (RE)build in preparation for our senior thesis. Phyllis Frantantoni is a senior web designer. Becky Duignan is a LEED Accredited Professional interior designer. And I am Holly Burns, a painter and illustrator turned designer.

The following is a brief documentation of how we spent five days at the end of April building and learning with New Orleans Area Habitat for Humanity.

On the first morning, we were greeted by Habitat for Humanity Construction Supervisor. Terry Cooney, who put us to work along with the 75 Canadians and approximately 10 other Americans who came to volunteer.

Our team of three focused on three houses over the next five days. We worked on a variety of projects ranging from building and raising exterior walls to ensuring roofing was built to code. Over those five days we had conversations with Terry about the energy-efficiency of the Habitat houses, about how they acquire their materials, about construction and life in New Orleans post-Hurricane Katrina, as well as conversations about the community and his personal experiences In New Orleans. We also learned about Habitat's sweat equity requirements: how home-owners and their families are required to volunteer their time and give back by building other Habitat homes.

Terry and his colleague. Chris, kindly offered to take us on a tour of the devastated Lower Ninth Ward, as well as show us the newly constructed Musicians' Village in the Upper Ninth Ward.

What we saw in the Lower Ninth Ward was a community that, even four years after Hurricane Katrina, continues to struggle. This area is one of the most at-risk areas for future hurricane damage because of its proximity to the levy. Habitat for Humanity does not rebuild in the Lower Ninth Ward as if is many feel below sea level. However. Make it Right, assisted by Brad Pitt, builds with the fragile ecology of the Lower Ninth Ward in mind, as people still warn to return to their homes there.

The Musicians' Village, in the Upper Ninth Ward, has fared better. It looks much