

# The Propeller Group's Prospect.3 exhibit wows St. Claude Avenue

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The Vietnamese/American art team The Propeller Group provides a captivating cross-cultural experience at the UNO gallery on St. Claude Avenue during New Orleans' international art festival, Prospect.3.

Start with the lush 20-minute video titled: "The Living Need Light; The Dead Need Music," a dreamily shot survey of what we are told are burial rituals in Vietnam. The wetland environment, the catholic symbols, the above-ground cemeteries and the brass band leading a funeral procession will all seem eerily familiar to a Crescent City audience.

When the band illogically marches into chest-high water playing "It Ain't My Fault," the video achieves spine-tingling symbolism, recalling the 2005 flood when the Vietnamese enclave in eastern New Orleans was inundated. Adding to the weirdness of the scene, the band plays the New Orleans classic on surrealistic Dr. Seuss-like brass instruments such as a tuba sprouting several other horns from its throat.

Those Frankenstein brass instruments play only a supporting role in "The Living Need Light; The Dead Need Music," but they are the stars of the sculpture exhibit that accompanies the video. In addition to the wonderfully weird instruments, The Propeller Group has produced band uniforms bearing embroidered versions of the "Katrina voodoo" symbols that the National Guard used to mark flooded homes.

Congratulations to the members of the Propeller Group, Phunam, Matt Lucero and Tuan Andrew Nguyen and their collaborator Christopher Myers for poetically capturing the balance of celebration and poignancy that marks so much of life in South Louisiana.



What: "Prospect.3: Notes for Now" is an art festival featuring 58 individual exhibits of works by artists from around the country and world, displayed in 18 museums and other sites in New Orleans. The artists were selected by Franklin Sirmans, the curator of contemporary art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA). Prospect.3 also includes several popup exhibits that were not selected by Sirmans. These scattered exhibits are called P.3+ or satellite exhibits.